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ABSTRACT

Community service is reemerging as an important focus for secondary education. This report, the culmination of a Ford Foundation project, considers independent schools' role in encouraging community service. Specifically, the project attempted to identify community service programs in private schools affiliated with the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), explain the programs' philosophies, describe their characteristics, and analyze their context. To accomplish these objectives, NAIS schools were surveyed and nine schools with exemplary programs were visited by the project researcher. Chapter 1 summarizes the quantitative survey data--program budget, level of student participation, and the number of hours students serve. The next three chapters provide a qualitative analysis of the schools' community service programs based on data from the nine visits. Chapter 2 considers the relative importance of the programs, while chapter 3 examines school policies that either encourage or inhibit them. Chapter 4 considers the role of service program coordinators in program design, implementation, and operation. The final chapter assesses program philosophies and accomplishments. Ideally, students' involvement in community service should engage their empathy and understanding of social dynamics, not merely expose them to less fortunate neighbors. Included are an appendix listing various service activity categories and a bibliography of 20 references. (MLH)

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COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAMS IN INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

A Report

by

Lee M. Levison

January 1986

This study was funded by the Ford Foundation.

National Association of Independent Schools
18 Tremont Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02108

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INTRODUCTION

> For... citizenship the following are essential: A many-sided interest in the welfare of the communities to which one belongs; loyalty to ideals of civic righteousness; practical knowledge of social agencies and institutions; good judgement as to means and methods that will promote one social end without defeating others; and as putting all these into effect, habits of cordial cooperation in social undertakings ("Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education," p.13).

> America is a country dependent on a willingness to participate in politics, to work for local communities, to help other people in need. Yet today, these civic instincts have reached a precarious state.... For too many years, we have failed to nourish the supply of civic concerns among our youth. It is high time the we set about to renew the stock (Bok).

Sixty-seven years have intervened since the Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education articulated the "Cardinal Principles of Education," and concern about civic education has emerged once again. Politicians, educators, national leaders, and policy analysts have cast the spotlight on community service. The primary focus has been on schools and young people--how can educational institutions "nourish the supply of civic concerns among our youth"? This report considers independent schools' role in developing "A many-sided interest in the welfare of the communities to which [students] belong." It is the culmination of a project sponsored by the Ford Foundation to assess community service in NAIS member schools in the United States.

The objectives of the project have been to identify community service programs in NAIS member schools, explain the philosophies that underlie them and describe their varied characteristics. The report also analyzes the context in which community service is practiced and the concerns and responsibilities of those who administer these programs. For the purposes of this study, community service is defined as work performed by students for the community outside of school. A service program is a formal, school-sanctioned and -supported vehicle for students to engage in service work. To accomplish these objectives a survey of community service programs in NAIS member schools was conducted, and nine schools with distinct and exemplary programs were visited by the project researcher.

The project researcher worked with an NAIS Staff Advisory Committee to select schools for site visits. Based upon information derived from the survey, selection criteria included: school location, school type, program type (required or voluntary), length of time the program has been in operation, and program reputation among knowledgeable school-people. Visits to schools were brief and intensive. The researcher spent one and one-half days at each school interviewing students, faculty, parents, administrators, service organization personnel, and program coordinators.

Chapter 1 summarizes the quantitative survey data--program budget, level of student participation, and the number of hours students serve, etc.. Chapters 2-4 constitute a qualitative analysis of community service programs in independent schools based largely upon data from the researcher's nine site visits. Chapter 2 considers the relative importance of community service programs in those nine schools. Chapter 3 examines school policies that either encourage or inhibit community service programs. Chapter 4 considers the role that service program coordinators play in program design, implemenation and operation. Chapter 5 assesses the underlying philosophies of service programs and what programs accomplish. Appendix A presents categories of service activities gleaned from surveys. The questions, conclusions, and observations in Chapters 2-4 are intended to provoke critical discussion about community service.

CHAPTER 1

SUMMARY OF SURVEY FINDINGS

The primary purpose of this survey is to describe community service programs in NAIS member schools. Approximately 865 surveys were mailed out in August 1985 with a return date of September 20, 1985. A follow-up mailing was sent shortly thereafter with a final closing date of October 15, 1985. School heads were asked to forward the surveys to community service program coordinators.

Highlights from the survey include:

- Of the 448 respondents (56.4% response rate), 277 NAIS member schools do have community service programs. 112 (41.4%) schools require community service.
- Almost all (91%) program coordinators have other responsibilities in their schools: 45% are teachers, 28% administrators and 7% chaplains. Coordinators devote an average of 7.2 hours per week to program administration. Fifty percent of the coordinators devote 5 hours or less each week to community service programs.
- Fifty-six percent of the programs do not have formal budgets. Seventy percent of the budgets total $150.00 per year or less.
- The average number of student participants in community service programs is 116. In 54% of the programs, 80 students or less participate.
- Fifty-three percent of the students involved spend 10 weeks or less at their placements. They average 6 hours per week at their placements; however, 58% of the students spend 2 hours or less per week at their placements.

Program Purposes and Objectives

Community service is considered part of the school's extra-curriculum in over half (53.1%) of the schools which have community service programs. In 17%, community service is considered part of the school's academic program. Service programs are said to be related to the school's basic mission in 226 (82%) schools. In 44%, a description of the community service program is included the school's brochure. Thirty-three percent of the programs have written program goals.

Respondents were asked to rank nine (9) potential values of community service on the following scale: "Not Important," "Important," and "Most Important." The percentage of respondents who checked each rating are listed in Table 1. (Due to missing data, answers will not total 100%.)

TABLE 1

IMPORTANCE OF POTENTIAL VALUES OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

	NOT IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT
Acquaint students with career possibilites.	48%	43%	4%
Broaden students' understanding of places and people.	1%	30%	65%
Develop personal qualities such as confidence, self-reliance, maturity, and responsibility.	.4%	23%	74%
Increase students' ability to relate to and work with others.	1%	25%	69%
Increase students' desire to do well in school.	53%	36%	7%
Help bridge the gap between generations by fostering an adult-youth partnership.	15%	54%	25%
Help a student acquire new skills, interests, and knowledge.	7%	57%	31%
Nurture the habits of community service and volunteerism.	1%	16%	80%
Develop strengths of character and personality.	1%	55%	76%

Program Description

The average age of community service programs is 7 years. Forty-nine percent have been in operation for 5 years or less. Over half (56%) of the programs lack formal budgets. Many respondents wrote that money is available on an "as needed" basis. Where they exist, program budgets range from $50.00 to $14,500. Seventy percent of the program budgets fall between $150.00 and $50.00. Forty-two programs (17%) are supported by outside funding sources, most frequently foundations, followed by community organizations and corporations.

Ninety-two percent of the coordinators have other responsibilities (see Highlights). Ten programs have full-time program coordinators who work between 28-45 hours per week.

The number of student participants in service programs ranges from 3 to 1000. In some cases the high rate of participation is due, in large part, to intensive, single activities such as Special Olympics, food drives, and monetary contributions to school-wide charities. The average number of student participants is 116. The median is 75. Fifty-four percent of the programs have 80 or less student participants.

Respondents were asked to check True or False regarding the six program characteristics listed below. Table 2 summarizes the results.

TABLE 2

PERCENTAGE OF PROGRAMS WITH SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS

	TRUE(%)
Awards and/or commendations given by the school to students for service work.	48%
School's daily schedule permits interested students to participate in the service program during the regular school day.	47%
Training courses offered before students engage in actual service work.	43%
Academic courses contain sections related to the community service program.	28%
Students receive academic credit for participating in the service program.	17%
Students in the service program are exempt from some class and/or extracurricular activities.	23%

Program Operation

Virtually all schools (81%) screen placements before making them available for student consideration. The most frequently considered criterion is "type of service"; others include "location of placement" and "quality of supervision." Sixty-four percent of the programs that allow students to choose their own placements provide them with selection guidelines. In 72% of the programs students attend orientation meetings; 37% of the programs prepare students by holding workshops on service and voluntary organizations, while 22% provide students with written materials. Twenty percent of the coordinators have had some form of training.

Most students (81%) engage in service work during the regular academic semester (or term). Thirty percent of the programs permit students to perform service work during the summer. Thirty-four percent of the programs permit students to engage in service work during scheduled class-times. Students spend an average of 13 weeks at their placements. In 53% of the programs students spend 10 weeks or less at their placements. Since the range of hours spent at placements each week is quite wide (1-50 hours), the average is 6 hours per week, but in 58% of the programs students spend 2 hours per week or less at their placements.

In slightly less than half (47%) of the programs, regular group meetings are conducted to discuss student experiences. Forty-three percent of the programs have scheduled private conferences between the program coordinator and students.

In 70% of the programs, conversation among students, coordinator, and placements accounts for program evaluation. Forty-six programs (17%) have been evaluated by a formal, school-wide evaluation process.

Program Problems

Respondents were asked to place a checkmark beside those problems listed below (Table 3) that have affected the implementation and/or administration of their service programs.

TABLE 3

IMPLEMENTATION AND/OR ADMINISTRATION PROBLEMS

	PERCENTAGE CHECKED YES
Academic schedule too tight to allow for flexibility during the regular school day.	69%
Transportation	51%
Faculty support	18%
Location of school	16%
Lack of parental support	5%
Competition from extracurricular activities for student time after school.	68%
Lack of student interest	21%
Finances	8%
Locating a sufficient number of placements that meet program criteria.	13%
Providing adequate supervision at the placement site.	21%
Providing adequate supervision at the school.	13%

Thirty-two percent of the respondents said that it is difficult to involve students in the school's community service program. The most freqently cited barrier to student participation is that academic schedules are too tight to allow students to engage in service during the regular school day. Competition from extracurricular activities is the next most frequently cited obstacle.

Respondents were asked to gauge the extent to which various school constituencies (students, facutly, parents, administrators, athletic coaches, trustees, and alumni/ae) support the community service program. Administrators were rated as the most supportive group followed by trustees, faculty, students, parents, and alumni/ae. Athletic coaches were clearly the least supportive group.

Interestingly, with respect to all the foregoing areas (budget, program characteristics, operations, problems) whether the program was voluntary or required apparently made no difference.

Please turn page for Tables 4, 5, and 6.

TABLE 4

TYPE OF SCHOOL (STUDENT-TYPE) BY PROGRAM TYPE

	Required(%)	Voluntary(%)
Boys	11%	10%
Girls	68%	67%
Coed	22%	22%
Total percentage of required and voluntary programs in the sample.	(41.4%)	(58.6%)

TABLE 5

SCHOOL TYPE BY PROGRAM TYPE

	Required(%)	Voluntary(%)
Boarding	.9%	.7%
Boarding/Day	13%	18%
Day	77%	69%
Day/Boarding	9%	12%

TABLE 6

PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOLS WITH SERVICE PROGRAMS BY REGION

	Boys	Coed	Girls
East	14%	18%	17%
Middle Atlantic	32%	16%	32%
Midwest	11%	7%	8%
New England	21%	22%	13%
Southeast	11%	17%	7%
Southwest	4%	9%	5%
West	7%	10%	18%
Totals for sample of student-type.	(10.4)	(67.4%)	(22.2%)

Schools visited

The nine schools chosen for visits were selected according to these criteria: school location, school type, program type (required or volunteer), length of time program has been in operation and its reputation. Project researcher Lee Levison spent a day and a half at each school interviewing students, faculty members, parents, administrators, program coordinators, and outside agency personnel.

Jesuit day school
New England
900 boys, grades 9-12

Program goals
Student is committed to doing justice
Is aware of selfish attitudes in himself
Consciously seeks to be more understanding of others
Consciously seeks to be more generous to others
Consciously seeks to more accepting of others
Understands that Christian faith implies a commitment to justice in society
Is developing compassion for victims of injustice
Reflects on own feelings and attitudes in service experience
Understands global scope of many social issues
Is beginning to appreciate the complexity of many issues of social justice
Is beginning to realize that the values of society are sometimes in conflict with the demands of justice
Is beginning to realize that justice is a virtue that is required

Program profile
8 years in operation
Full-time coordinator; 3 days a week
$2,000 budget
Required for all grades; seniors off campus
10 weeks/4 hours a week; during school day
Senior projects: must work with the physically disabled, mentally disabled, the elderly, or tutor the poor

Sacred Heart day school
New England
200 girls, grades 7-12

Program goals
To reflect upon our society and its values in relation to the Gospel
To obtain knowledge and skills needed to act on problems of oppression and injustice
To become actively involved in the wider metropolitan community

Program profile
8 years in operation
Part-time coordinator (teacher); 10 hours a week
$5,000 budget
Required in grade 11; 45-50 students
32 weeks/3 hours a week
Students work with classmates in teams at placements

Boarding school
Middle Atlantic
350 boys, grades 9-12

Program goals
To develop in students a will toward personal sacrifice in service to others
To produce students who understand others and their needs
To expose students to less fortunate individuals and to the special rewards inherent in serving them

Program profile
6 years in operation
Part-time coordinator (teacher); 5 hours a week
$400 budget
Required prior to graduation; 80-100 students
10 weeks/6 hours a week (including summer months)

Day school
Midwest
550 coed, grades 7-12

Program goals
To encourage and recognize individual volunteer work
To serve those in need or the community as a whole through an established agency

Program profile
7 years in operation
Part-time coordinator (part-time school counselor); 3-4 hours a week
$50 budget
Volunteer; 70-80 students
50-hour minimum for community service to be recorded on student transcripts

Day school
West
600 coed, grades K-12

Program goals
To develop in students the attitude that one of the greatest values in life is to recognize that one can be of help to others who are less fortunate
To give students an awareness of the problems of social injustice in society at large and specifically in their own community

Program profile
5 years in operation
Half-time coordinator (teacher); 20 hours a week
No budget
Volunteer
15-30 weeks/1 hour a week

Day school
Southwest
900 coed, grades K-12

Program goals
To be of service to the community
To broaden the background of students
To meet people of different cultural, ethnic, and economic backgrounds

Program profile
6 years in operation
Part-time coordinator (teacher); 4-6 hours a week
No budget
Volunteer (may substitute for athletics 1 trimester in junior and senior years); 70 students
8 weeks/6 hours a week

Day school
Midwest
750 coed, grades PS-12

Program goals
To understand the principles and practices of helping others in a social service setting
To learn about and from others whose experiences differ from those of students
To learn about a community need and/or social service agency
To reflect on social service participation and to become aware of the relation between ideas and experience
To examine the social implications of certain practices and values in society
To develop skills in organizing activities and solving problems
To communicate effectively about personal experiences, insights, and concerns
To strengthen self-esteem and sense of usefulness by becoming involved in tasks with risk consequences
To develop a sense of social responsibility to the larger community
To develop a commitment to helping others

Program profile
6 years in operation
Part-time coordinator (teacher/administrator); 3 hours a week
$1,000 budget
Required for grades 6-8; 165 students
11 weeks/4-6 hours a week; during school day

Day school
Midwest
700 coed, grades PS-12

Program goals
To seek out people who are in need or poor, mentally ill, elderly, shut in, orphaned, or crippled and find ways of helping them. (Other goals are ancillary. We are not trying to help our students, although the program obviously does.)

Program profile
25 years in operation
Part-time coordinator (teacher); 2 hours a week
No budget
Volunteer; grades 9-12; student-run; 140 students
30 weeks/2-5 hours a week; some daily, mostly weekends

Friends day school
New England
750 coed, grades PS-12

Program comment
Service is an important component of Quaker education; service to the community comes from a belief in the potential of each human being to live and serve others.

Program profile
13 years in operation
Part-time coordinator (teacher); 28 hours a week
$200 budget
Required for graduation (grades 9-12)
8-10 weeks/4-5 hours a week

CHAPTER 2

IMPORTANT BUT SECONDARY

> The greatest problem with community service programs in independent schools is that they are superficial. (an anonymous School Head)
>
> Not a helluva commitment to service in independent schools. (an anonymous educational researcher)
>
> The incentive for "talking" about service in private schools is that the "talk" projects to the public that the schools are not little enclaves for the rich. (an anonymous educational researcher)

Community service programs in independent schools are symbolic, or so I was led to believe by numerous school-people. My predisposition at the beginning of the project was that I would find community service programs in independent schools to be symbolic, marginal, and non-essential. Early on in this project, more than a few school heads, university-based educators, and community service program coordinators agreed that most independent school community service programs, regardless of the school's mission or the rhetoric associated with the service program, existed primarily for the purpose of meeting the external needs of schools; that is, community service "looks good" to the public. They claimed that service programs soften the image of independent schools as "little enclaves for the rich."

This chapter examines the centrality or importance of community service programs. Two principal questions are considered: (1) To what degree is the community service program tied to the school's core educational objectives? and (2) In the nine schools visited, how important is community service in the general "scheme of things"? Do schools that espouse a commitment to community service (or a related end such as the "common good" or "social justice") really follow through on the commitment?

The sweeping generalizations articulated above appear true in _some_ instances. At some schools community service programs seem to be symbolic, marginal, and non-essential. Elsewhere community service is central, directly related to the school's mission, and an important part of what the school is about. In order to distinguish between and among programs regarding the importance of community service, we must examine what schools _say_ and what they actually _do_.

The centrality of the nine service programs visited in this study is considered by examining each program from the perspective of the following focal points or criteria:

(1) _Nature of reference to community service or related activity in the school's statement of purpose. (Distinct, Vague, None)_

- The aim of this criterion is to determine the clarity of the school's reference, if any, to community service. Can the reader ascertain from a statement of purpose that community service is either a means for the school to achieve one its primary objectives or that service is an important part of what the school is about?

(2) Explicitness of the community service program statement of purpose. (Specific, General, Vague)

- One may assume that detail and explicitness of service program objectives are fair indicators of how important the program is to the school. Programs with detailed and elaborated objectives are regarded seriously by the school (trustees, administration, and faculty) as a substantial amount of time, care, effort, and cooperation have been devoted to the development of program objectives.

(3) Relationship between the service program statement of purpose and the school's statement of purpose. (Strong, Slight, None)

- This criterion is concerned with the degree to which the service program and the school's mission are aligned. To what extent is the service program directly connected to a primary objective of the school? Is the language in the service program statement of purpose consistent with the language in the school's statement of purpose? Put simply, is the service program "on the same page" with the school's mission?

(4)Degree to which the goals of the service program are widely known and shared. (Extensive, Moderate, Not at all)

- To what extent do students, faculty, administrators, and parents recognize goals of the service program? Do they support those goals? Assuming that an important or central program is broadly acknowledged and has a broad base of support, it will be referred to frequently and explicitly, and most people will know and understand the program's objectives. Further, if the program is indeed important and considered a vital component of the school it will bee seen as part of the school's culture, as "... the way we do things around here" (Kennedy and Deal, p.4).

(5)Physical evidence of the service program inside the school. (A lot, Some, None)

- A service program that is central should have a prominent physical presence in the school. The community service program coordinator (for the purposes of this report, the individual directly responsible for a school's service program will be referred to as the service program coordinator) has appropriate office space, access to support staff, and can utilize school computers if necessary to manage program data. The program's bulletin board is in a visible and heavily traveled location. One can tell there is a service program by walking around the school.

(6) Visibility of students and staff who participate in the the community service program. (Very, Somewhat, Not at all)

- One complaint heard from a number of coordinators is that both the program and the kids are "invisible." A common refrain from coordinators is that "nobody knows just how good the program is and what kids get out of it." In many cases the "invisibility" of community service is due to the voluntary nature of the program--a well-defined critical mass does not participate at one time. On the other hand, this problem was also identified by a coordinator in a required program. Those who complained compared their programs to athletics and the visibility of kids on the major athletic teams. They cited the following characteristics of athletics that lead to its high visibility: team results announced regularly in school meetings; stories about outstanding players appear frequently in school and local newspapers; and letter jackets identify team-members from non-members.

Once programs have been considered according to the six criteria, they may be further categorized as either _instrumental_, _strategic_, or _symbolic_ (Louis and Corwin, 1984). These categories serve to describe the centrality of community service programs, based upon the six measures cited above. The categories are described below.

Instrumental Community Service Programs

Instrumental community service programs are closely tied to the core educational activities of the school. For instance, the school claims in its mission statement that educating students about "social justice" is one of the school's priorities, and that community service is simply one of many activities that addresses "social justice." There is a logical and overt connection between the school's purpose and the service program's purpose; program objectives are consistent with service-related objectives outlined in the school's statement of purpose. Since service is one of the school's core objectives, _instrumental_ programs require students to participate in community service.

As a central component of the school, the service program is part of the school's culture, part of the "way we do things around here"(Kennedy and Deal, p.4). Not only is the service program mentioned in the school's brochure, it is perceived by students, faculty, and parents as one of the things that makes the school special. An instrumental service program is an essential and vital part of the school. The success of the school is intimately related to the service program's success.

The following is a statement of purpose from a school with an instrumental service program:

> The mission [of this school] is to educate for character. The school should be an educational community that will enable students to be active, informed, and responsible citizens in the racially, econmically, religiously and culturally pluralistic democracy in which we live.

The reference to "active... and responsible citizens" leads quite naturally to the idea of a service program as one way to promote "active" responsibility. That the school's primary objective is to "educate for character" also suggests that the service program assists the school in fulfilling its primary objective. "Community service," as an activity, is not overtly mentioned, but the concept of "active" "citizenship" is addressed powerfully and distinctly. This school's service program, which happens to be in the middle school, is directly related to the school's purpose of "educat[ing] for character". Although, the upper school does not have a program, the head indicated that upper school students and faculty would discuss starting an upper school community service program during the current academic year.

Another example is quite simple and straightforward: "A social awareness which impels to action." This is the third goal of five in the school's mission statement. Here again, although community service is not explicitly addressed, it is clear that the service program at this school is an important means of achieving one of the school's primary objectives.

Explicit references to service (or to service-related activities) in school statements of purpose are usually indicative of specific and comprehensive service program objectives. The following is an example of an instrumental service program's statement of purpose:

> 1. Understand principles and practices of helping other in social service setting; 2. Learn about and from others whose experiences differ from students' own experience; 3. Reflect on community service participation and to become aware of the relationship between ideas and experience; 4. Examine the social implications of certain practices and values in society; 5. Develop skills in organizing activities and solving problems; 6. Communicate effectively about personal experiences; 7. Strengthen self-esteem; and 8. Develop a commitment to helping others.

These are specific, clear, and, in some cases, measureable objectives.

In *instrumental* service programs, *school objectives* and *program objectives* are closely linked. One school cites "committed to doing justice" as one of its school-wide objectives. Service *program* objectives include: "developing compassion for victims of injustice; understand[ing] the global scope of many social issues; beginning to appreciate the complexity of many social issues; beginning to realize that values of a society are sometimes in conflict with demands of justice; and beginning to realize that justice is a virtue which is required." Quite obviously, the objectives of the service program are linked to the objectives of the school.

Since *instrumental* service program objectives are closely connected to the school's fundamental mission, program objectives are often widely known and shared by faculty, students, and parents. A faculty member at one school with an *instrumental* program said: "In a visible fashion we try to heighten their [the students] awareness of issues related to social justice. And our community service program is not an island unto itself, community service is really integrated into the school." Another faculty member at that school observed: "The community service program is very public. It is part of the school. It is a given. It is an established part of the curriculum. And it is not like doing yearbook. " A student claimed that the service program is "One of the best programs at the school." Another student said that the goal of the program "Is to become a better Christian." Parents associated with this program remarked that it is one of "the best programs" at the school; they were also able to articulate that one of its goals is to "put the Gospel into action."

In schools with *instrumental* service programs, the importance of community service is further reflected by the physical presence of the programs in these schools. Typically, *instrumental* programs have offices in "prime" locations. If the coordinator does not have dedicated support staff, he or she does have access to support personnel. Information related to the program and service in general is posted on bulletin boards that are placed in heavily-traveled locations. In one program the coordinator's name and office number are posted on the school's directory in the main entrance. These are all "little things" that contribute to the program's being perceived by the community as important.

Students and staff who participate in *instrumental* programs are visible in the school community. It must be reiterated that programs designated as instrumental are all required. Hence, there is a critical mass. In one case, the entire middle school participates, not just a single grade. Since these programs engage a critcal mass of students, members of the school community see service as part of "the way [things] are done around here." Service is part of the school's culture.

Strategic Community Service Programs

Strategic community service programs are linked to the school's mission, but the connection is not as pronounced or emphatic as in an instrumental program. Community service is cited as a secondary objective for the school; it is not presented as being vital to the school's fundamental purpose. The relationship, then, between the service program and the school's mission is not as clear as in an instrumental program; objectives of the service program and objectives of the school are not necessarily related.

A strategic program has a purpose, albeit a rather unclear one, that is loosely related to the the school's mission. Often the driving force behind a strategic program is some one individual who believes strongly in community service. In some instances that individual is a teacher who thinks that community service is a means for the school to address "character education," or it may be a school head who views service as a way to mitigate the "self-centeredness" of the current student generation. The program is therefore not driven by the school's purpose or philosophy as is true of an instrumental program.

A mission statement from a school with a strategic program declares that the school "... is dedicated to academic excellence." However, student involvement in the community is referred to in the last sentence of the statement of purpose: "[the school's name] seeks to provide experiences through which young people can discover themselves, their community and their world." Service or service-related activity is not articulated as a primary goal in this school. Ten specific objectives related to the school's broad goals are listed following the statement of purpose. The eighth objective is a rather nebulous reference to community service: "By encouraging student involvement in the community and community involvement in the school." The clarity and centrality of service in this school's statement of purpose is much less pronounced than in instrumental schools' statements of purpose.

Vague references to service in school statements of purpose are commonly mirrored by vague program goals. In one strategic service program the school's stated goals are "To develop in students a will toward personal sacrifice in service to others; To provide students with the opportunity to understand others and their needs; To expose students to less fortunate individuals and to the special rewards inherent in serving them." In comparison to an instrumental program's goals these are much less explicit, detailed, and comprehensive.

In strategic service programs the connections between school objectives and program objectives are less strong, less definite than one finds in instrumental programs. The statement of purpose in one school declares: "We try to help each person to become an active participant in an ongoing community and to develop a sense of moral awareness and individual conscience." Another objective in the statement of purpose is that the school helps students develop "a strong commitment to the common good." On the other hand, the service program's statement of purpose is as follows: "Service is an important component of Quaker education; Service to the community stems from the belief in the potential of each human being to live and serve others." The goals of the school and the goals of the program are only slightly related or linked.

One consequence of vague program goals and the limited connection between service program objectives and the school's mission, is that few people in the school community are aware of and care about service program objectives. In a *strategic* program school one student said: "People don't think about it much." The program coordinator admitted that the service program is "a sports alternative." A student observed, "The majority [of students] take the easy way out. They choose placements that you can't get a lot out of." Program goals are not widely shared.

Strategic service programs do not usually have a prominent physical presence in their schools. Most coordinators in such schools work out of their classrooms. Few have printed program descriptions, although in some cases there are bulletin boards with lively displays. Evidence of the program is minimal, its presence not easily felt or seen.

Student and staff participation in *strategic* community service programs is rarely noticed by members of the school community. Some required *strategic* service programs are invisible in the school. Programs and student participants are not highly visible in programs where students are given a tremendous amount of latitude in terms of when and how they will fulfill the requirement. In some cases it can be performed anytime during matriculation in the upper school. Placements are not carefully researched by the school. Students seem to drift in and out of the program. The program lacks cohesiveness and identity. In schools where students are not visible, service is a highly individualized activity. Often placements are selected because they are convenient and easy. In one school, due to its rural location and the paucity of service agencies, students can fulfill the requirement during the summer.

Symbolic Community Service Programs

Symbolic community service programs exist in schools whose mission statements do not refer to service as one of the school's objectives. These programs are unrelated to the school's core values.

As with strategic programs, symbolic programs often emerge as a result of committed individuals who believe that community service programs can fulfill needs such as providing the community with essential services or exposing students to those who are "less fortunate." Yet in schools with symbolic service programs, program objectives are not widely known or widely shared, nor are they agreed upon by members of the school community. Community service means ten different things to ten different people. Since these programs are not grounded in the school's mission, it is difficult to identify clear objectives.

Seldom do program statements of purpose shed light on actual program objectives. For example, the goal of one program in the study is to provide students with a means for placing service work on their school transcripts. Clearly, more substantive objectives inhere in that program, but none are articulated.

Symbolic programs sometimes exist to satisfy what Meyer and Rowan call the "logic of confidence" (Meyer and Rowan). According to the "logic of confidence," all good schools (e.g., schools that are responsible, competent, modern, and high performing) are expected to have certain programs, facilities, and courses in common. By having a service program, regardless of how central or effective it is, the school avoids questions about why it does not have one (Meyer and Rowan): "When organizations incorporate environmental myths into their formal structure, they provide an account of their actitivites that protects the organization from having its conduct questioned" (Meyer and Rowan, p. 439). For schools to be perceived as "good", they ought to have service programs because consumers (parents and students) expect all "good" schools to have them.

Some symbolic service programs may be effective--that is, they may provide the community with needed services and some students may have meaningful experiences; but program effectiveness and achievement are not tied to the effective performance of the school. How the program performs is not a primary concern of the school. The key issue is that the program exists, that it is visible to the community.

The mission statement of a school with a symbolic service program reads as follows: "[The school] has as its primary academic objective the preparation of young people for higher education." Non-academic components of the school's mission could be located neither in the school's brochure, nor in xerographed mission statements. This school does attend to non-academic issues (i.e.,athletics, drama, and the arts), but they are unrelated to what the school fundamentally stands for.

Another statement of purpose, not quite as clear-cut, refers to community service in the following passage--the penultimate paragraph in a rather long statement of purpose: "Athletics and other extracurricular programs complement the academic in fostering personal growth. Students are encouraged to take part in activities which involve the surrounding community." To say that service is an objective at this school would be an exaggeration. That this oblique reference to service occurs at the end of a statement that focuses almost exclusively on the school's commitment to "academic excellence," suggests further that service is not a primary objective. Rather it is an afterthought.

Schools with vague or non-existent service goals in their statements of purpose rarely articulate specific service program objectives. A symbolic program is found in a school whose community service goals are stated, in their entirety, as follows: "To encourage and facilitate service to the community." Another program's goals read: "To allow students an opportunity to serve the community and to broaden their horizons." Where is the detail? Where are the cognitive and affective objectives? The objective in the first case is simply "service." In the second case the objectives are "service" and "broaden[ing]... horizons," or exposing students to situations and people who are different.

In symbolic programs, the relationship between the schools' goals and the service programs' goals are non-existent because school statements of purpose do not refer to community service as a primary objective.

Goals in most symbolic service programs are not widely known or shared for the following reasons: (1) Such schools do not refer to service in their mission statements; (2) Such schools do not articulate detailed program objectives; and (3) Such schools do not consciously connect community service with institutional purpose. The coordinator of a symbolic program observed: "I don't think anybody at the school realizes how big and successful the program is but me." A student claimed that the school "is very concerned with appearance and the program can help its public image." In symbolic programs the coordinator rarely meets with administrators to discuss the programs. Administrators rarely understand how the programs operates, and faculty members know almost nothing about the service programs, although most offer that "community service is a good idea."

As with strategic programs, in symbolic programs physical evidence of community service is negligible; students and staff associated with service programs are not visible to the school community.

Conclusion

This chapter began with the claim that all community service programs are not symbolic. Three categories of service programs have been identified: instrumental, strategic, and symbolic. Instrumental service programs are closely related to the school's core educational objectives where the service program is a means for the school to achieve one of its primary objectives. Strategic programs are indirectly related to the school's mission; that is, service-related objectives are not primary in the school's statement of purpose. Typically the impetus for these programs comes from individuals rather than from the values of the school. Symbolic service programs are found in schools whose mission statements do not include service-related objectives. Some mention service, but not as an objective. Here again the program exists primarily because of the efforts of an individual.

The foregoing analysis might be criticized on the grounds that it is much easier for religious schools to embrace instrumental service programs. It might be argued that religious schools may automatically embrace service as a value shared widely among their constituents, while secular schools, lack either the latitude or the historical connection and commitment to service. Parents who send their children to religious schools accept, even expect, children's engagement in activities that promote religion. Secular schools demand, above all else, the best possible academic training for their children. Many secular schools cannot, therefore, devote "prime-time" to non-academic activities.

Yet some secular schools do espouse a commitment to service-related objectives in their mission statements; and in some cases, those objectives are primary. Rarely do such schools attempt seriously to achieve those objectives. Their service programs are supported primarily by the efforts of isolated individuals, rather than by institutional structures. The rhetoric is in place. What is missing is the institutional commitment to fulfill the school's objectives in a way that would encourage civic participation by students.

CHAPTER 3

SCHOOL POLICIES: BRIDGES AND BARRIERS

Some schools in this study periodically implement policies that undermine their community service programs. Although these schools publicly espouse a commitment to service, their policies make it difficult for programs to operate effectively. Such policies are barriers: they prevent service programs from improving, from expanding, or from operating effectively and efficiently. Other schools studied have implemented policies that reinforce and promote their community service programs. These schools have attempted to eliminate barriers that prevent the efficient and effective operation of service programs. Choices about policies are dictated both by resources (i.e., time, money, personnel, and equipment) as well as by philosophy.

Few schools have unlimited resources. How resources are allocated indicates a school's priorities. For example, monies for faculty salaries and educational supplies are linked to the school's principal task: preparing students for higher education. Policy decisions demonstrate what a school values, what a school deems important. As shown in Chapter 2, community service is not equally valued by all schools. For some it is essential (instrumental) while elsewhere it is secondary (symbolic). In schools where community service is instrumental policy "bridges" (policies that support the service program) are in evidence. In schools where community service is not highly valued, policy "barriers" are evident. In both instances, policies are statements about the school's priorities for community service and plans for its implementation. Taken as a whole, policies indicate how schools intend to accomplish service-related goals.

This chapter considers two questions: (1) What school policies promote community service? (2) What school policies inhibit community service? Policies related to community service range from noting service work on student transcripts to redesigning the school schedule so as to permit students to engage in service work during the school day. Deciding whether or not to require service is perhaps the most significant policy decision a school makes concerning community service. This issue is hotly debated among independent school people concerned with community service.

Required Versus Voluntary: The Great Debate

At the 1985 NAIS Annual Conference a panel discussion focused on why schools choose either to require service or to make it voluntary. Steven Lorch, head of the Akiba Hebrew Academy (Merion Station, PA), pointed out that "Akiba's motto is 'Study leads to action'...[and] one means we have found for making a statement about the primacy of action over pure scholarship is to _require_ of students a significant commitment to community service." Moreover, he added, required service is consistent with the Hebrew concept of "Tzedakah, which means _just_ social action." According to Lorch, "tzedakah" is viewed as a "...binding, divinely ordained commandment on a par with all other religious obligations." In the case of Akiba, community service is considered an obligation, and it is therefore perfectly appropriate to require it of students.

Not all religiously affiliated schools require community service. C. Thomas Kaesemeyer, head of the Westtown School (Westtown, PA), a Quaker school, shared Westtown's rationale for its voluntary service program as part of the same program. The Westtown community, he said, is concerned "... that by instituting a requirement of community service, there is the risk of depreciating service in other areas." The "other areas" include, in particular, a school-wide volunteer program that has students assist in the day-to-day running of the school (e.g., daily janitorial and kitchen work). The school was also concerned about the effect of "requir[ing] an indifferent or uninterested student" and that the student's performance might "... be a real hardship on the person being helped." Finally, required service is inconsistent with Westtown's Quaker values.

These examples suggest two major points of contention related to requiring service. Religious schools often see service as an obligation; service is something that all members of the faith must do--it is non-negotiable. Those who oppose required service argue that the client suffers when he or she is subjected to an indifferent student.

Among the nine schools visited, students in required service programs were found to support required community service unequivocally. Asked if they would advocate changing from a required to a voluntary program, the common refrain was "Keep it mandatory. It is too easy not to do it." Many students echoed that sentiment: "If it was voluntary, I would not have done it." "If you don't require it, students would never do it. They would just pass it over." Requiring students to serve "forces" them to do something which, given the choice, they would not do. Why do they need to be forced to serve?

For some students, the thought of working with the elderly, the handicapped, or the terminally ill is terribly frightening. Many students in required programs said they would have avoided doing service because they "were afraid." A mother told the story of her daughter who literally had to be dragged into the nursing home the first few visits because she was petrified of elderly people. A student told me about a classmate who cried uncontrollably before entering her placement. In some cases, then, students are reluctant to serve voluntarily because they fear the unkown.

Other students in required service programs say they lack the discipline to make time to do service. Their lives are busy, and spending time in a nursing home is neither fun nor profitable. Many students are over-achievers. They participate in as many school non-academic activities as possible ranging from sports to drama. Some students and faculty believe that the motivation for this hyper-involvement is selfish. Students in independent schools want to insure that their "extra-curriculars" appear strong when placed under the microscope of a college admission committee. One service coordinator expressed concern about "overworking kids in activities." He thinks "Kids are overly concerned about success; they are obsessively compulsive."

Some students seek economic trade-off's. They work at paying jobs after-school. One teacher said he was confused by his students and their mad rush to work between 15 and 20 hours per week. They do not need the money, but they work nevertheless. Community service cuts into a student's time to earn money. Without a community service graduation requirement, many students would choose not to participate. Students in required programs believe that requiring service is the only way to get people to do service on a regular basis while they are in school.

Students in voluntary programs feel quite differently. "In a required program not everybody will be interested and they won't put everything into it. You should have people who want to do it." Required service "detracts from the voluntary nature of the program. It takes the heart out of it." "Mandatory service," observed one student,"carries a large negative connotation because we feel like the faculty is trying to control our lives." "If you are forced to do it," declared one student,"it becomes a chore." As far as these students are concerned, required service forces people to do something that they don't want to do. As a result, the client, the object of service, suffers. Required service, according to one student "is stupid because you can't force someone to volunteer." Part of volunteering is the spirit of giving, which such students see as essential for really helping people. Making someone serve turns service into a job.

Students in voluntary programs seem to hold a theory of service that focuses almost exclusively on the spirit of giving freely. Forcing people to give, to serve, compromises the giving spirit. There is a sanctity that students associate with giving and volunteerism. If a person does not want to serve voluntarily, then he or she should not be forced to do it. This view is not limited to students.

Coordinators interviewed in schools with voluntary programs, like their students, did not demonstrate an interest in moving to required service. As most of them interviewed put it, forcing a student to serve "compromises the quality of the service and makes the client suffer." What makes service special is that "it comes from the heart." The value of service is lost if it becomes just another requirement imposed by the school. Some argue that since not all students are ready to do "altruistic" work, forcing a student into a service situation prematurely could turn the student away from service forever. For the most part, adults and students engaged in voluntary programs, agree about the merits of the voluntary aspect.

"The problem with a voluntary program," explained a coordinator from a required program, "is that you get kids who would do it anyways." In his view all students ought to engage in service, not just the "good" kids who would do it in any case. According to this view, voluntary service programs reach out to the people who need it least. Required programs, on the other hand, insure that all students have a service experience, that all students have the opportunity to benefit from service work. One coordinator remarked, "requiring service is the only way we could be assured that everybody would have a service experience." "We give them certain academic requirements, and there is no equivocating on that," claimed one coordinator,"and we expose them to the benefits of team play. Through our required service program we expose them to the rewards of helping other people." These coordinators equate service with academic work. All students ought to be exposed to service. It is the school's duty to require this experience.

Coordinators in required programs are well aware of the arguments against requiring students to serve. "The most common argument against requiring service," observed one coordinator,"is that you will ruin the student forever; he will always be antagonistic about service." He went on to share a story which, in his opinion, refutes the above agrument. "There was a student who fought me vehemently about being required to do community service; he went to college and after graduation spent a year in Belize doing volunteer work." A school head shared a similar story: "One student took great umbrage at it because we were requiring him to do service. The student got involved, reluctantly, with handicapped kids. He got the commencement award for service." "The fighters are thinking more about the value of service, and they get more out of it," claimed one coordinator. The message in these statements is that requiring students to serve does not necessarily turn students away from service. In fact, the tension created by requiring service compels some students to reflect on service and to press school officials for reasons. Requiring students to serve can instigate a cognitive dissonance that results in a questioning of fundamental values and beliefs, and, ultimately in new learning.

Opponents of required service believe that forcing students to serve not only turns them away from service, but it is unfair to the clients who are victimized by indifferent students. As a student in a voluntary program observed, "Required service takes away from the beauty of volunteering. People whom we are serving shouldn't have to sacrifice for our growth." The director of volunteers at a nursing home was asked if she noticed a change in the quality of work by students when the sending program shifted from voluntary to required: "I am very pleased with the student's interest. I was concerned when the program became a requirement; I was concerned that they might feel differently. But I don't see much of a difference. It is a beautiful program." Other volunteer coordinators who utilize students from required programs responded similarly; there was no discernable difference between students from required and voluntary programs. If there was a slight difference, students from well-organized and highly supervised required programs were "better" volunteers than students from poorly organized voluntary programs.

Which side is right? On both sides of the required/voluntary dichotomy, untested assumptions abound. Those who advocate required service believe that service is good for all students regardless of their attitude toward it. Implicit in their advocacy of requiring service is that service helps all students, regardless of their maturity and whether they want to do it. On the other hand, proponents of voluntary service believe that forcing students to serve will forever "turn the student away from service."

Factors schools should consider when deciding whether to require service range from the school's philosophical objectives to subsidiary but important issues such as the school's location, the capacity of the community to absorb student volunteers, transportation, scheduling, and staffing.

The Schedule: When Will It Get Done?

In the community service survey, the most prevalent problem identified by respondents was the tightness of the academic schedule and its inflexibility for scheduling service during the regular school day. Likewise, in conversations with people at the schools, scheduling emerged as the most difficult problem to resolve--often identified as an important factor in influencing program performance.

Schools have a variety of important tasks to accomplish during the course of a school day that runs from approximately 8:00 a.m. to 6:00p.m.. In most schools, academics claim "prime time" (8:00-3:00), while athletics occupy the afternoon, after classes. When, then, do students engage in community service?

"I think it is good to incorporate it into the school week and school day," remarked one student. "It is important for the school to say by deed that this is what we are doing." According to this student, incorporating service into the school day is a clear statement to the school community that service is important. The school is willing to adjust its schedule to insure that the service requirement is fulfilled during regular school time.

The coordinator of a voluntary program observed that because his program is "integrated into the school day, it has worth" in the eyes of students and faculty. Similarly, a coordinator of a required program where service is performed during regular school hours observed: " The school schedule shows students that the school values service enough to give them time off to do it by including it in the regular schedule." Building service into the schedule is a potent symbol. It conveys an important message to the school community and especially to the students that the school values service.

Schools that require service without accommodating it in the daily schedule run the risk of turning service into an onerous burden--a chore that students want to complete with a minimum amount of fuss. In such programs, students face making choices between service work, academic work, family time, and leisure time. Faced with these choices, service becomes an obstacle--just another requirement to be gotten out of the way.

In service programs where time is provided within the school's schedule, students rarely complain about the time demands of the service programs. Where students must find out-of-school time, they complain frequently and vociferously. "The school should cut it down [the 40 hour requirement] to 30 hours. There is too much going on: college applications, work, homework, and practice." In such settings students tend not to take the community service program seriously because they do not believe the school takes it seriously. Schools with service requirements and untouchable schedules undermine the service experience for students.

In schools where students must make time to complete the requirement they appear less thoughtful and caring about the program than their counterparts in schools where service can be performed during the school day. As one student observed, "the majority of kids take the easy way out, they do things that you can't get a lot out of." Students who had to make time to do service seemed more concerned with hours and "getting it over with" than with the quality of the experience.

Not all school-people believe that a service requirement should be "easy" for students to satisfy. Some faculty, service coordinators and school heads state that learning to make time for service is part of what they are trying to teach their students. If a school makes the requirement too easy by building it into the schedule, students will not learn about making choices, they will not learn that including service work as part of their lives entails making sacrifices. Making choices--giving up a movie or a trip to the mall--is an important step in the process of making service a habit. As John Dewey wrote: "Habit means that an individual undergoes a modification through an experience, which modification forms a predisposition to easier and more effective action in a like direction in the future" (Dewey, p.57).

Laurel Zimmerman (The Masters School, Dobbs Ferry, New York), speaking at the 1985 NAIS Annual Conference panel on community service, maintained that

> students... need to make time for community service now. They must see it as part of everyday life, so that the student who plays varsity sports for three seasons and is a student government officer and is taking three AP's will still give some amount of his time and expertise to the outer community.

Responding to a question about time pressures that students face, an administrator at one school in the study remarked "Our program is the real world; there is a value for them to have to manage their time, to make choices, and to be responsible."

Scheduling is an issue not only in terms of when during the day, but when during the year, community service is to be performed. The boarding school in our sample, located in a rural area, has had to consider the entire calendar year as an opportunity for students to complete its service requirement.

very few service opportunities exist nearby. Additionally, the school does not want to penalize three-season athletes, who would not have sufficient time during the academic year to fulfill the requirement. Accepting summer work for credit avoids local placement problems, but does spawn other problems. It is difficult for the coordinator to evaluate summer placements. In spite of a rather comprehensive quality control system for summer placements, the coordinator admitted that he has little control over the quality of the experience for the student. However, summer service appears to be the only alternative in view of the school's location and its rigid schedule.

Another consideration related to time and the schedule is the pace of service work. At what rate should students satisfy their school's service requirement (or guidelines in a voluntary program)? Should the hours of service be spaced out, or contained within a brief time frame? Alternatively, should students be given maximum leeway to fulfill the hours however they wish?

Left to their own devices, some students procrastinate by waiting until the last minute to fulfill service requirements. These surges may compromise the quality of the service students deliver, and, in schools which include regular reflection sessions, surging students have nothing to reflect upon. One coordinator confronted and resolved the problem of surging students. He emphasizes that "doing it [service] on a regular basis makes it a more meaningful experience for the student and the client." His solution for increasing the regularity of performance was to push for a schedule change that created a two hour block of time before afternoon athletic practices, to be used as a community service period. In addition, the coordinator stipulated that students must complete a specified number of hours by certain dates during each semester. He enforced this by assiduously checking student performance during each "cycle" or attendance period. He believes that the quality of the discussions in the reflection sessions has improved as a result addressing the problem of end-of-the-term service surges.

Service as an Alternative to Athletics

One of the schools in the study decided to manage the relationship between its required athletic program and its voluntary service program by allowing students to substitute community service for athletics one trimester during both the junior and senior years. At the outset this policy decision represented an important policy "bridge," supporting community service in the context of the school's overall programs.

Subsequent developments in this policy, however, posed "barriers" to the effectiveness of community service at this school.

"We had to legitimize service," observed one of the program's sponsors, "by giving students a sports credit." But as the number of students who elected to do community service increased each year, the "sports people were getting uptight about the growth of the program." The coaches' perception of the program was that students were using it to get out of sports. As more and more students elected to participate in the service program, the coordinator felt that "Some of the coaches were not too keen" about community service.

As a firm believer in the importance of "conditioning" and athletics, the school head instituted a new policy for the 1985-86 academic year. Only 35 students per trimester can now participate in the service program. Asked why the head had limited the number of students who could do service each trimester, the coordinator replied, "The head doesn't think I can supervise more than 35 students at one time." The head responded differently: "What I don't want to see happen is that kids go into the service program for the wrong reasons, that is, to get out of sports. We need to be more selective in choosing kids for the service program. We don't want kids getting out of too many sports." From the head's perspective students were using the service program to avoid the school's sports requirement. His new policy is an attempt to insure that a critical mass of students remains available for athletics. Was the athletic program actually losing substantial numbers of students to the service program? One school administrator suggested that the head's decision was influenced more by the coaches' fear that the service program might hurt athletics, rather than by reality.

The issue of using service to avoid athletics also surfaced in conversations with students and faculty. Some students wonder why they have to be "bench warmers" when they could be doing something "really useful" by participating in the service program. Other students explain that fulfilling a community service work alternative also allows them to work a part-time job after school for a few days each week. Evidently for many students service is the lesser of two evils. Service is worthwhile because it not only "gets you out of sports," but "helps your college application, too." In spite of the various attractions to service, most students at this school are no less or no more thoughtful, reflective, or concerned than students in other schools. In fact, these students appear enthusiastic about their community service experiences and quite supportive of the program coordinator and the "great job" he does in running the program.

The head's decision to limit the number of students in the service program is an example of a policy "barrier." The coordinator has done a terrific job of building the program and arousing student interest in service. Many students are eager to participate in the program. But it is evident that the head values athletics as an integral program that the school must not compromise: "If there would be some way the service program could be bigger without bothering other programs, I would support it." He cannot "support it if it interferes with other things." The head's policy implies that the school ought to "stick to the knitting" (Peters and Waterman) by focusing on those programs that are essential or central to what the school is about. This case demonstrates that service is not an instrumental program. The head has consciously implemented a policy that detracts from and might well torpedo the service program.

Seemingly small issues can emerge as major "barriers" and may have an enormous impact on program performance. Like termites, "little things" slowly and steadily eat away at the program. In this study two such concerns surfaced as major obstacles to successful programs: transportation policies and scheduled meeting times.

"Transportation is a major problem," observed a faculty member, "because we have inadequate vehicles--they are unsafe." This theme was emphasized repeatedly by students and faculty. The first topic of conversation in an interview with the school's program coordinator was the quality of transportation: "One of the snags we are running into is transportation and the condition of the vans. You gotta have a way to transport the kids." As far as the coordinator is concerned, the program is only as good as the the school's capacity to safely transport students to the placements.

Beyond the conditions of the vans the school appears to operate without a clear policy regarding who has priority for using them. Each day is a new adventure for this coordinator as he attempts to line up transportation for his students. On the day of the interview he borrowed a faculty member's station wagon.

Students who have to wait around for vehicles to be located may simply give up and move on to another activity. Faculty members who might ordinarily volunteer to assist may not want to take responsibility for children in vehicles that are in horrible condition. It is demoralizing for a coordinator and students to prepare for a particular activity only to reschedule because there is no transportation. For the coordinator to have to fight regularly to secure vehicles is a drain on that person's energy and patience.

Another school's program is plagued by the inability to maintain a regular meeting schedule. The community service committee is supposed to meet six times per year during a regularly scheduled activity period. The purpose of this committee is to publicize community service, to organize large group service projects, and to oversee the school's voluntary service program. Meeting with this group is important for the coordinator as these meetings are an opportunity for her to get student feedback, to brainstorm, and to plan service activites.

"The school keeps changing the calendar," said the coordinator. "If you are going to have clubs, they must have meeting times that kids can count on." Not having the club's scheduled time protected bothered her greatly. It makes her job much more difficult because she has to catch kids on the fly. A lot of planning for group activities is done over the telephone. This "little thing" has a significant effect on the coordinator. She feels that the school's administrators do not value her program, that they do not think her service committee is important. The school's failure to protect the service club's meeting times bears more on the coordinator's attitude than it does on actual program performance. On more than one occasion she remarked that she "is the only one in the school who really knows how much kids get out of the program."

Conclusion

School policies can either support or inhibit their service programs. Policy bridges support, reinforce, and promote the program. Scheduling service during the school-day, for example, is a policy bridge. But some schools implement barriers to service, such as placing a cap on the number of students who may participate in its voluntary program because the program limits the number of students available for athletics. Unclear policies regarding transportation and conflicting schedules can further undermine the program.

Whether requiring service is a bridge or a barrier depends upon the school. Schools ought to consider carefully whether a service requirement fits into the school's mission. What kind of administrative commitment is associated with required service? Does the local community offer a sufficient number of placements for students to have meaningful experiences. Schools that require service without thinking clearly about the implications of the decision, may turn required service into a barrier.

Several interviewees argued strongly against required service programs on the grounds that such a requirement would turn students off for good and it is unfair to clients. Those arguments were not substantiated by the research.

CHAPTER 4

ZEALOUS CHAMPIONS

> It is 12:30 pm. The teacher/service coordinator has just finished his third history class of the day. Eighteen students are waiting for him to drive them to a local elementary school where they will work with learning disabled children. It is about a 15 minute ride to the elementary school. The teacher/service coordinator hustles across campus to get both vans (the researcher will drive one). It is 12:35. Only one van works. The teacher/service coordinator sprints across campus to ask a colleague for the keys to his stationwagon. Eight students pack into the wagon. The van is at its legal limit--10. Upon arriving at the elementary school, the student-volunteers are assigned to their classrooms by the site coordinator. The teacher/service coordinator works with a young boy helping him with his pre-Thanksgiving project, a paper-matche Pilgrim. Fifty minutes later the van and wagon are loaded up. The teacher/service coordinator repeats this routine Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday of every school week.
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> In another school students are required to complete 40 hours of community service prior to graduation. They are permitted to use one athletic trimester (while in the upper school) to fulfill the requirement. Approximately 50 students per athletic trimester (the school runs on an academic semester system) participate in the service program. In this school the coordinator takes great pride in the fact that she works with each student to identify a placement that meets the student's needs (e.g.,student's eagerness to work with people, student's maturity, and distance the student travels to school each day). There are approximately 2 weeks between athletic trimesters. During that time the coordinator places the 50 or so students. She interviews each student for 10 to 15 minutes. This process occurs in the fall, winter, and spring.

The above vignettes are not unusual in their rendering of the tasks that most community service coordinators handle regularly. Their work is neither glamorous nor visible. Service program coordinators do not experience the thrill and public rewards of a championship season or rave opening night theatrical reviews. Their colleagues do not attend their "games". In most cases, parents and faculty do not applaud student performances. School and local newspapers do not regularly chronicle the performances of students in the service program. Rarely does the head send a note of congratulations to the coordinator for a "big" victory.

For the most part, community service coordinators are isolated even though they are responsible for hundreds of students in dozens of service organizations. In spite of the size of their programs, despite the fact that many programs are required, coordinators and their programs operate in the shadows of championship athletic teams, award-winning dramatic presentations, and intensive preparations for college. Why do such adults commit so much of their time to community service? Why do they volunteer to spend their time chauffeuring kids, keeping track of volunteer hours for dozens of students, going to hospitals, nursing homes, and day care centers to keep tabs on students, and taking the brunt of annual student complaints about the injustice of required service?

Popularized by the best selling book, In Search of Excellence (1982), the term "product champion" has its roots in Robert K. Yin's Changing Urban Bureaucracies (1979). The American Heritage Dictionary defines champion as "One that defends, fights for, or supports a cause or another person." It is justifiable, then, to refer to some coordinators as "champions," not only because they "fought for" their program during the design and implementation stages, but also because they continually "defend it" as an important part of the school's total program. Many coordinators approach their work zealously because, according to one school head:

> Service is not part of the natural flow of the school. Service rubs against the grain of a college preparatory school. The coordinator must be willing to rub against the grain to keep the program going.

Most service coordinators (in seven of the nine schools studied) "rub against the grain" and fight for their programs' existence. Most coordinators in the study (seven of the nine) designed and implemented their school's program.

"I did some service work in high school, I did some tutoring. During my senior year in college, I would visit the elderly, and that was a profound experience," recounted one coordinator. He explained further that volunteering had given him tremendous satisfaction and brought him great joy. Working with the elderly was a "rewarding experience." He spoke passionately about the importance of helping other people. He spoke also of "compassion toward the less fortunate--people who are physically handicapped, who are poked fun at, the poor, the starving." His service experiences were indeed profound aspects of his own development.

Another coordinator explained: "I just think community service is extremely important. Members of the human race must realize that others are in need. It is not a matter of being nice; it is a matter, instead, of having a strong conviction that it is a responsibility to serve." His commitment to service is rooted in his religious beliefs. "Out of my religious convictions, service automatically comes." He believes that everyone has a responsibility to serve. Service is characterized as a non-negotiable obligation that all people have as members of the human race. Service and helping are, in his opinion, what being human is all about. Yet his approach with students in his secular school is anything but dogmatic. He is, instead, quite low-key and does not preach to students or his colleagues. He lives a life of service and is, it seems, quite satisfied to let his actions speak for themselves.

Some coordinators have been attracted to service primarily for intellectual and philosophical reasons. "My move toward community service was primarily intellectual. The idea of practice and action was really a logical kind of thing." This coordinator's academic preparation was in theology and philosophy. "As a theology teacher I spent time talking to students about what the 'good' is. And I thought, what is it really? One has to act on the right choice. I found that Aquinas' writings argued for acting on what is right. Thus, if you practice the virtues, they will become part of your life." Community service, from his perspective, is an opportunity to act, to put into action the abstract theories of right and wrong. For a teacher of religion and ethics, community service was a "logical thing" because it provided students with a practical, hands-on experience. Community service makes the abstract concrete.

British philosopher R.S. Peters agrees with those who perceive service as an important exercise in doing the "right," instead of just talking about it: "It is one thing to formulate principles clearly, and another to justify them.... But it is still another thing to apply moral principles intelligently to concrete circumstances"(R.S. Peters, p.302). From this perspective, community service provides students with the opportunity not only to help people in need, but to practice what they learn in the classroom in the unpredictable world of real people, real problems, and real consequences.

Five of the nine coordinators interviewed were initially attracted to community service work because of their own experiences as volunteers. Service was experienced as a fulfilling, rewarding, and meaningful endeavor. Two coordinators were attracted to service because of the intellectual, logical appeal. In one case religious convictions were also involved. For these coordinators, service is a concrete way to live the "good," instead of merely talking about it.

Five of the nine coordinators interviewed in this study actively participate as volunteers in local organizations. One coordinator was recently named to the board of trustees of his local cerebral palsy organization. Another coordinator uses his Saturdays to counsel and to conduct secular services for prisoners. At one school the coordinator works alongside his students Monday through Thursday. "It has a positive effect on the kids," he observed, "and I am able to share with them." Staff people at the sites where he works "like it, although in some instances they don't expect it." Engaging in some service activities can be hazardous to the coordinator's health--on one occasion he boxed three rounds with a club member at a local Boy's Club. In another school, the entire middle school faculty works with groups of their students at a variety of placements. Some teachers actively participate alongside their students while others attend to supervisory tasks.

One coordinator insisted that service program coordinators must "live it [service]!" In his opinion, they must practice what they preach. "It provides kids with a role model," claimed one coordinator, "they see that service is not a dumpy thing that just kids do." In the program where parents (usually mothers) work alongside their children, one mother commented that it was important "for children to see parents as involved as they are, because it helps them make a commitment." Those coordinators who do service themselves believe it is important to do so because, as the program's leader, they ought to set an example for the students and for the entire community.

Coordinators who engage in service work hope students will develop behaviors modeled by adults. By engaging in service, the coordinator gains insight into the problems faced by students, clients, and placements. Adults who engage in service make service work more credible for students. Students realize also that the argument about insufficient time is not acceptable as an excuse for avoiding community service. The philosopher R.S. Peters writes, "... if a man does not pursue or at least feel drawn towards what is good then he really does not understand it" (R.S. Peters, p.146). Most service coordinators consider service a "good" that students ought to engage in, and which they, as coordinators, should also perform.

In some cases community service champions have been identified as "experts" in their field, community service professionals who have been brought in from outside the school to design and implement the school's new service program. In both schools where this occurred significant commitments had been made to these coordinators. In one case the coordinator is only a half-time staff appointment, but he spends full-time on service. The other coordinator has a reduced teaching load. In both cases these individuals had prior community service experience at the secondary school level.

"I was specifically hired," recalled one coordinator, "to convince the faculty that community service is a good thing, and to develop and implement a community service program." He referred to his first service program as a "pilot program" for the program he is currently responsible for. In another school, the coordinator was asked "about designing and running the program during the interview process," and was informed that his course load would be divided evenly between teaching and community service.

Not all schools can afford the luxury of hiring either a full- or part-time community service coordinator from outside the school. One internal innovator sat as a member of a school-wide curriculum review committee. He was "personally charged with being an advocate for ungraded extracurricular activities." He was assigned that particular responsibility because, in his view, he "was seen as the person most involved with extracurricular issues at the school." In another school the service coordinator's affiliation with his school's service program emerged from his student council advisory role, as well as his own strong feelings about the need for community service. Service activities originally fell under the umbrella of the student council. As service activities increased in popularity and scope the activity developed its own independent organization. The student council advisor stayed with it and currently acts as the service program's advisor. Another coordinator, as a new teacher, offered his services to the school to design, implement and manage a service program. He saw community service "as a good way to get involved with kids."

Only at one of the schools visited had the coordinator been asked to take over an existing program. What she was given to "take over" was literally nothing more than a single piece of paper that outlined, in the broadest terms, the program's goals. She was "asked out of the blue by the Director of Curriculum." Her first thought was "Why me?", although subsequently she has enjoyed it thoroughly.

Service Coordinator as Champion

To innovate is to "begin or introduce something new" (The American Heritage Dictionary). Seven coordinators in this study were "innovators," responsible for introducing their schools to a programmatic approach to community service. Most schools had a history of sponsoring informal community service activities, such as fundraising for charities, collecting old clothes or toys for the needy, and food drives. In these cases coordinators formalized their school's approach to service.

But often service coordinators are more than innovators, they are "champions." Community service coordinator "champions" have not only designed and implemented service programs, they have "fought" for their programs during the development and implementation stages, and they have continually "defended" the programs against internal and external threats. Their antagonists have included parents who want the school to focus only on the basics, students who believe that the requirement is unfair and the hours too extensive, coaches who feel they are losing too many students to the service program, and faculty who want to eliminate all non-academic time from the daily schedule.

Community service champions do not work in a vacuum. At schools where programs are quite elaborate and central, the administration is actively supportive of community service. In interview after interview coordinators said that the most important ingredient for a successful service program is administrative support. Such support can be quite explicit and overt, as in the case of the school head who speaks frequently to students, faculty, and parents about community service and who makes financial and other material resources available. Support also can occur behind-the-scenes, as in the case of the head who lobbied with faculty members to garner their support for a service program and who quietly procured a van for the program. Administrative support can be displayed subtly by personally supporting the coordinator but otherwise not interfering, allowing the coordinator to function autonomously.

Definitions of Champions

In Changing Urban Bureaucracies Robert K. Yin observes that innovators are "...active, dynamic, and charismatic"(p. 98). The innovator's functions include:

> (1)Understanding the needs of an innovation and taking the initiative to identify and allocate specific resources for the innovation; and (2)Coordinating the use of the innovation with existing procedures and practices" (p. 99).

Yin's study showed that "The importance of the innovator was reflected by the fact that the majority of the case studies (17/19) had a person who brought information about the innovation into an agency, developed internal support, and helped to promote the conditions necessary for the agency's initial use of the innovation"(p. 151). Yin's "innovator" has a high level of ownership of the innovation (or in this case, the program), is an energetic and dynamic person, and is an initiator of action, not a reactor. "Innovators" are experts who work diligently to promote organizational support and acceptance of their new programs.

The role of "product champion," an elaboration of Yin's "innovator," was popularized by Peters and Waterman in their best-selling study of high-performing companies, In Search of Excellence. According to Peters and Waterman, "The champion is not a blue-sky dreamer, or an intellectual giant. The champion might even be an idea thief. But, above all, he's the pragmatic one who grabs onto someone else's theoretical construct if necessary and bullheadedly pushes it to fruition"(p. 202). Champions "... have the know-how, energy, daring, and staying power to implement ideas"(p. 207). Champions are "action-oriented." They are advocates, defenders, promoters, and backers of innovations. They are energetic, action-oriented, committed and sometimes myopic. They are, in a word, zealous.

Following Yin's definition of an "innovator" and Peters and Waterman's definition of a "product champion" one might develop the following operational definition of a "community service champion":

- Knowledgeable about community service; could be considered the school's in-house expert on service.

- Is adept at cultivating support in the school for the program; has expertise in navigating the often treacherous (and unforgiving) political waters of schools.

- Has an extraordinarily high level of energy; willing to commit significant amounts of time and effort in order to make the program "fly."

- Persistent in his or her efforts to make sure that the school's structure supports the service program; constantly on the look-out for structural, symbolic, and political barriers to program effectiveness.

- Is action-oriented; inclined to make things happen.
- Never loses sight of the program's "core values," but is willing to make concessions for the long-term health of the program.
- Has the support of the school's administration; is comfortable taking risks as long as the safety of the students is never compromised.

With this definition as a guide, consider the experiences of several community service champions encountered in this study.

The Persistent Innovator. This coordinator was "on board" for only two months when he was asked to submit a proposal to the faculty for a required community service program. The proposal was accepted by a unanimous vote of the faculty. Asked why the faculty responded so favorably and quickly, he said, "The body knew where the head wanted to go." The head had announced the implementation of a required service program as a top priority.

This coordinator champion moved quickly. He started a pilot program approximately 2 months after the faculty vote. In subsequent months he worked diligently to develop faculty support for the program. "I cultivated a small but highly supportive group of faculty members." He also realized that for the program to "take off" and grow it would be necessary to create a separate department for community service. With support from the head the department was created with all the departmental trappings--an office, staff support, and computer access. "It seems that there were too many barriers to simply work within the existing system, so the best alternative was to go outside the existing structure and create a separate department to meet program objectives." In succeeding years this coordinator has added required courses, has expanded the reflective component of the program, has modified the school's daily schedule, and has expanded the program so that freshmen, sophmores, and juniors are introduced to service through requirements in each of those years. Currently he is working on a summer program whereby students may volunteer to spend approximately six weeks in Belize doing service work.

As a service champion this coordinator displayed each of qualities listed in the operational definition. He is highly knowledgeable about service and actively involved in local and regional groups that focus on service programs. Granted that he started with the full support of the school head, in conversations with faculty and administrators it was evident that he also has earned their support and respect. He constantly scans the environment for opportunties to improve and expand the scope of the program. He talks animatedly about "battles" that he has lost and won. He is persistent but not unrealistic; he knows full well what is within the realm of possibility at his school. He pushes constantly on the organization to widen its conception of what is "doable" and acceptable. He attempts to educate not only the students, but the faculty and administration as well.

Playing Politics With The Faculty. A service champion in one school volunteered to start the program. As a member of a school-wide curriculum review committee he assumed responsibility for developing a community service program proposal and he worked tirelessly on it. It was no easy feat designing a proposal that would be acceptable to the faculty and administration. He sent letters to dozens of schools with well-known service programs and telephoned school heads and service program coordinators around the country. Numerous proposal drafts were exchanged among the committee, administration, and faculty. In spite of initial frustrations, he continued to refine the proposal. By the end of the process, the program's scope had been radically reduced. A provision that would have required a radical schedule change--scheduling athletic practices in the morning one or two days per week--was deleted, as was a values education course. Yet the coordinator never compromised the program's core value: "exposing all students to people who are less fortunate." He was persistant, tenacious, and resilient. He "owned" the program, and he admitted to taking some of the defeats personally. Yet "taking it personally" did not hurt him; instead, it increased his resolve and determination to make service a reality at his school. Eventually, he succeeded.

Students As Champions. Champions are not always single individuals, and they need not always be adults. At one school students are responsible for virtually every facet of the program. They have an advisor who serves mostly as a sounding board; he lets the students manage the program:

> I am not a director. The last thing I want to do is run the show. I would rather see them fail than me run the show--as long as someone does not get hurt. My role is to help kids problem-solve. I see myself as a catalyst.

Each year a new of group of students assumes responsibility for the program. With this annual transition comes a fresh perspective, a willingness to do things differently, and a desire to make things better. This cyclical approach has some built-in inefficiencies. It fosters a propensity for reinventing the wheel. But these repetitions are calculated, healthy processes.

By design, this program nurtures student service champions: students who are knowledgeable about service, who actively work to garner student and faculty support for the program, who work incredibly hard to insure that the program succeeds, and who are not afraid to make changes.

Faculty Members As Champions. A group of faculty members can act as service champions as well. In one school the decision to have a service program was made by a consensus of the entire middle school faculty. Voting was not, however, their only responsibility. Each faculty member was actively involved in designing and implementing the program. During the summer before the program's first year, each faculty member was responsible for researching potential service placements and making arrangements for the comming year. The program is truly their program. A coordinator is appointed, but the decision-making responsibility lies with the faculty at large.

Not all teachers support the program with equal enthusiasm. As one teacher said, "it is just one more thing to do." Yet, in conversations with teachers it was evident that most do support it. There is a strong sense of group ownership. This program is reviewed annually by the faculty and annual adjustments are made.

These four examples illustrate the various ways in which individuals, groups of students, and faculty groups can act as service champions. What they share in common is an enthusiastic commitment to service. Some might be more adept at handling the politics of the program, while others are fanatical workers. In each case these champions are actively engaged in making their particular service program the best it can be.

In two of the schools studied, the coordinatorsare not the "zealous champion" type. They exhibit a low-level of ongoing innovation in the program. Their defense of the program is subdued and restrained. In one of these cases, the reason appears related to the fact the coordinator's involvement with the service program is one part of what is already a half-time appointment. "Community service is just one of many little programs," observed this coordinator. Her expectation for her program is minimal.

In both of these schools, program designs are simplistic. The primary concern, in both cases, seems to be with program efficiency, clear program routines and procedures. In a paper presented at the International School Improvement Project (1985) Louis and van Velzen claim that "appointing a project director who is deeply immersed in the organization is likely to lead to lower levels of innovativeness"(p. 9). In these two schools, the coordinator's immersion in the politics and the values of the school has resulted in the design of a relatively uninnovative but efficient service program. Their understanding of the school manifests itself in non-threatening program designs. Fundamental school policies and practices are not questioned (e.g., daily schedule, role of athletics, and curriculum). An important objective in program design has been to insure that it conforms to the one seemingly inflexible school structure--the sanctified schedule. The language one coordinator uses in discussing her program confirms this claim. She expresses concern about the program being in "balance" with other "little" activities.

These coordinators' preoccupation with "fit," with insuring that that their service programs will be in "balance" with other "little programs", results in the "trivialization" (Louis and van Velzen) of the service program. They do not appear as champions because they are so entrenched in their schools' current policies and practices.

Service Coordinators: Leaders or Managers?

Previous sections of this chapter have considered how coordinators are first attracted to community service, whether they "practice what they preach," and the extent to which they are active and zealous defenders of their programs. We have examined the coordinators' role during design and implementation stages; but what happens to their role once the program is institutionalized.

It is one thing to be an active, zealous, and persistent defender of the program during the developmental stages. The average age of the community service programs studied is nine years. How do coordinators manage their relatively mature programs? What will happen if they leave?

Some coordinators lead. Others manage. Some coordinators have a vision of what their program ought to look like and how it is connected to the school's mission. Others focus exclusively on program specifics and efficient operation. Some coordinators, as champions, push relentlessly on the school's traditional structures and publicly discuss "undiscussable" issues. Others accept the status quo and make sure that their programs "fit" in the school. Some never stop being champions. Others never were champions.

Leaders tinker endlessly with structure, schedules, placements, evaluation, and with program rationales. One coordinator described a "battle" that he had lost:

> I proposed an inter-disciplinary program, a Senior Seminar. I intended it to be one-quarter English, Social Studies, Theology, and Language. It was to be a humanistic seminar. During the year students would consider the concept of justice from four different perspectives. All but the English department agreed. The resistance was tied to a mentality that a certain

> amount of material had to be covered and one cannot deviate from that course.

He also described a victory in which he "was successful in convincing the headmaster to take the morality course out of the theology department and give it to me. This is one of the battles that I won."

As a persistent service champion and leader, this coordinator does not fear failure and looks constantly for opportunities to improve his program. In addition to his work inside the school, he has submitted proposals to foundations for grants related to the service program. He exhibits an intelligent tenacity regarding his program. He pushes but knows when to back-off. He continues, after eight years, to challenge assumptions, to work hard, to think creatively about service, and to be impatient. He remains a zealous service champion after eight years of sustained effort.

Service coordinators who are leaders question not only structural or design issues, they question the value of the program itself. One coordinator in particular has a vision of the cognitive objectives he would like his program to achieve. "I don't think our kids understand what it is like to be poor." Students must "understand the broad social dynamics to understand people in need." He admits that most of his program's activities are "prophylactic measures, a kind of song and dance routine" that fail to address those broad social issues that he thinks are so important. He aims to involve students in activities that are more "multi-dimensional" wherein they can develop an "analytic understanding of poverty" and can transcend the "sympathy" that they currently derive from most placements.

Some coordinators are primarily committed to managing efficient service programs, content with having "solid" programs that are "in balance" with the "other little programs" at the school. The smooth flow of paperwork and clear policies about what is or is not "acceptable" service work characterize these managed service programs; they are policy-driven. Coordinators in such managed programs rely on routine.

Are the nine programs truly institutionlized? The one student-run program has had the same faculty advisor for 25 years, and it seems to be a regularized, accepted, and popular student activity. Another coordinator believes her program "is very solid because it could operate without me." According to this coordinator, the solidity of the program is due to the fact that procedures and policies are written down. Coordinators are aware of taking steps to protect their programs should they leave. "I will not always be here. Institutionalizing the program is a must," observed one coordinator. His definition of institutionalization is a situation in which "with a turnover the program creates a problem by making it difficult to dissolve it." He is not certain that his program would be retained in its current form, but eliminating it completely would prove difficult since it is now a separate department.

Sentiments about the necessity of building an elaborate structure in order to insure program permenance are echoed by other coordinators. But it is by no means evident that most programs would maintain their current level of performance in the event of a personnel change. In instrumental programs, as well as in the strategic and symbolic programs, community service appears driven more by the charisma of the coordinator than by particular program components or school commitment. In most cases, heads indicate that they would try to maintain the programs if the current coordinator left. "I happen to believe that there are people right here who can do it as well," commented one head when asked how he would replace the current coordinator. Most heads indicated they would first look internally to fill the position. One admitted that "It would be hard to replace our current coordinator. I would not give up on it. Maybe it would not be a teacher. It takes a rare person, it might have to be a parent." From interviews with heads and coordinators at the nine schools, specific plans for continuing community service programs beyond the tenure of current coordinators seems nowhere in evidence.

Going Against The Grain Means Isolation

A persistent theme regarding service coordinators is that theirs is a lonely position. "Running the program means isolation," commented one coordinator," since it is not purely academic and it is not a sport." Another observed, "I don't think anybody at the school realizes how big the program is but me. No one but me will ever know how much the program touches kids." Another coordinator claimed, "I could run the program and communicate with nobody. No one knows what I'm doing. Community service can be very lonely."

Community service appears not to be a widely shared value in most schools. School-people readily respond that they think service is good, but coordinators have few opportunities to work with other adults in the school on service-related activities. In most schools, service activities are invisible. They occur off-campus. Students perform service on their own time either after school or on weekends. Interdependence with the rest of the faculty is rare. Coordinators handle the program alone, rarely with groups of other teachers or teams. It is a solo endeavor. The task of soliciting faculty support is frequently avoided because coordinators do not want to alienate their colleagues. Rarely does the administration exert pressure upon teachers to participate in the program. In two schools with *instrumental* programs, however, heads are attentive to service experience in teacher candidates, and they do explicitly ask teaching candidates if they could support and participate in the school's service program. In most cases school administrators pay little attention to service; their interest appears casual and supportive.

To cope with isolation some coordinators have organized area or regional meetings of service coordinators from several schools. Such meetings satisfy a number of needs, not the least of which is companionship. "Getting together as a group of service coordinators is important to mitigate the isolation."

Conclusion

Some coordinators become involved in community service because it has played an important role in their own lives. Others are attracted to it from a more abstract rationale. Most coordinators "practice what they preach" by regularly engaging themselves in active service. Most coordinators are zealous and persistent champions during the early stages of program development. As programs mature and become institutionalized, coordinators' roles may change. Some sustain a leadership pattern while others are content to manage and maintain the status quo. In any case, running a community service program appears to be a lonely role. Coordinators often plead for support from peers, administration, and even from students. Ironically, schools promote these programs in order to foster a sense of community, yet community service is often a highly individualized experience for both students and coordinators.

It would seem advisable for coordinators to look for ways of including faculty, more students, and parents in community service program management. The model of one person devoting full-, half-, or quarter-time to service may not be optimal. The few instances encountered of team approaches have seemed quite successful--teams of students, faculty, or parents. In the programs examined, coordinators who do it all, day-in and day-out, risk "burn out." Service lends itself to being a team or cooperative endeavor. Schools and coordinators might well seek ways to increase the interdependent nature of service programs.

CHAPTER 5

EXPOSURE TO THE "REAL WORLD"

> To reflect on our society and its values in relation to the Gospel. To obtain knowledge and skills needed to act on problems of oppresion and injustice. To become actively involved in the wider metropolitan community.*
>
> To develop in students a will toward personal sacrifice in service to others; To produce students who understand others and their needs; To expose students to less fortunate individuals, and to the special rewards inherent in serving them.*
>
> The goal of the community service program is to develop in students the attitude that one of the greatest values in life is to recognize that one can be of help to others who are less fortunate. As a means to this end, the program gives students an awareness of the problems of social justice in society at large and specifically in their own community.*
>
> The sole goal is to seek out people in the metropolitan area who are in need/poor, mentally ill, elderly, shut-ins, crippled, orphans, etc, and find ways of helping them.*
>
> (*Formal program goals from four of the programs studied.)

Taking action on oppresion, making personal sacrifices to serve others, becoming familiar with the less fortunate, and helping people in need are all worthy goals. This chapter pursues the following questions: Do service programs achieve their formal and publicly stated goals? Do students enlarge their understanding of social justice issues? Do students develop a lasting service habit? Do students really come to understand people who are less fortunate? Finally, this chapter considers the main articulated benefit of community service programs, *exposure* in light of an ideal objective--*engagement*.

Formal Program Goals and Specific Program Objectives

Espoused service program goals range from developing the habit of service to helping students experience a radical change of heart by "turning from selfish concerns to complete and unreserved generosity." A wide spectrum of program goals exist in the schools studied. In their 1983 study of community service programs, Newmann and Rutter collapsed service program rationales into four categories which appear applicable to the present study. The rationales identified by Newmann and Rutter are: *personal psychological development*, *intellectual development*, *social development*, and *social obligation*.

Schools with *personal psychological development* rationales aim to address students' psychological development through community service. For example, a program might be structured so that students can increase their feelings of competence in handling particular situations (e.g., working with retarded children, planning activites for day care children, working as a docent in a local musuem, or learning to handle elderly people). Many students and faculty observe that community service enhaces student self-esteem; students often feel much better about themselves (and their community) as a result of engaging in service.

One school's specific program objectives are consistent with this rationale: "To strengthen self-esteem and sense of usefulness by being involved in tasks with real consequences," and, "Communicating effectively about personal experiences, insights, and concerns." Survey respondents were quite conscious of self-esteem, but they saw it as an important byproduct or benefit of community service.

Where an _intellectual development_ rationale underlies community service, the program aims to develop generic cognitive skills. For instance, students frequently encounter situations that require problem-solving skills (e.g., developing a strategy for motivating an elderly person to participate in an activity, deciding how to approach a site supervisor about a client-related problem, or implementing a program to help students learn math). In addition to generic thinking skills, students often acquire highly specific knowledge ranging from illnesses that effect the elderly (e.g., Alzheimers disease) to child development theories used in day care settings.

One school states its _intellectual development_ rationale as follows: "To obtain knowledge and skills needed to act on problems of oppression and injustice." Yet few schools are explicit about learning objectives for their service programs. Only one of the nine schools visited sets forth its learning objectives in concrete and precise language. "Understanding the principles and practices of helping others in a social service setting; To develop skills in leadership, organizing activities, and solving problems; [and] To learn about a community need and/or social service agency." Most sevice programs are not so planned. Typically, gains in cognitive skills are unplanned byproducts; they are unintentional.

The social development rationale for community service encourages students to develop "... an empathy for the conditions of others"(Newmann and Rutter, p. 1). Students should gain an appreciation for people who are "different" from themselves. Students from affluent suburbs who work in the inner-city should enlarge their understanding of people with whom they would not ordinarily come in contact. Students should develop an appreciation and understanding of people who have different lifestyles and values, and learn that they are not totally self-sufficient and independent. They should learn that all people have a responsibility to help those in need. Students should learn also to work within a variety of organizations that are dedicated to serving people (e.g., hospitals, schools, nursing homes, day care centers, special care facilities for handicapped people, orphanages, government agencies).

In six of the nine schools studied, program statements of purpose are consistent with the social development rationale. One school writes that its program was developed to "allow students an opportunity to serve the community and to broaden their horizons." In another school the program goals are to "provide students with the opportunity to understand others and their needs, and to expose students to less fortunate individuals." Another school seeks: "To develop in students the attitude that one of the greatest values in life is to recognize that we can be of help to others who are less fortunate."

Three assumptions underlie the social development rationale: (1) people are interdependent, (2) those who are fortunate (usually indicated by having a high socio-economic standard of living) ought to share their good fortune with those in need (those of lesser socio-economic living standards), and (3) students ought to be familiar with people and lifestyles beyond the boundaries of their particular community.

The social obligation rationale focuses on the student's "... duty to contribute to society" (Newmann and Rutter, p. 1). This rationale suggests that people have an obligation, a duty, to contribute to the well-being of society by meeting the needs of those who are unable to do so themselves.

If the social development rationale communicates that we have a responsibility to help those in need, programs with social obligation objectives assert that we have a duty, that we are obligated to serve the community regardless of how such service may or may not satisfy personal agendas (or needs). Hence, schools with social obligation goals focus almost exclusively in helping those in the community who are in need. As an example, one program in the study has as its only goal helping people in need: "The sole goal is to seek out people in the [metropolitan] area who are in need/poor, mentally ill, elderly, shut-ins, crippled, orphans, etc, and find ways of helping them." Other service programs include social obligation objectives that complement other goal statements: "To develop in students a will towards personal sacrifice in service to others."

How do School-people View Service?

Formal and public statements of purpose do not always reflect the "real" or underlying purposes of the program. According to Bolman and Deal, "Goals are conceptions of desired end states. They are projections of what an organization wants to accomplish, produce, or reach" (p.35). Goals serve many purposes. Some are "honorific 'boy scout' goals... that credit the organization with desirable qualities"(p. 35). Others are "stereotype goals--goals that any reputable organization should have" (p.35). Thus, formal statements of purpose can be symbolic for organizations, they can promote a perception of the organization that is credible and responsible. Moving beyond the rhetoric, what do students, faculty, administrators, and parents actually believe are the goals of their service programs?

Students. "We need to be forced to get out into the community," one student commented, "because we are very unaware of how people in the world live." Another student declared that his school "shelters people and community service gives students a chance to see another lifestyle." Students complain about the narrowness of their experiences and about the homogeneity of their schools and communities. They speak of community service as a means of overcoming those circumstances. "We don't deal with lower income people," commented one student, "we are all the same--we are all spoiled."

The theme of independent school students being sheltered from the so-called "real world", of being shielded from people whose circumstances (based on economic status) are different from their own, was consistently articulated by students in all nine schools. Data from student interviews is unequivocal in this regard. Students believe that the primary goal of community service is to expose them to the "real world." Community service is seen as a means for students to move beyond their comfortable, safe, and "unreal" communities. Most students see service in terms of the social development rationale.

Some students claim that their school has a community service program because "They like to have it for the name, for the good public relations." Another student observed that her school is "very concerned with its appearance, and service is good for the school's image." Finally, one student commented that his school has a service program because it helps the school "get a good reputation." What do these comments mean? First, these students do not consider their schools' intentions to be as noble or altruistic as the school projects them to the community. Second, these students believe that their schools are preoccupied with public relations and with publicizing student community service activities. Schools issue press releases to local papers, have musically-oriented volunteers perform on television, and include articles about the service program in alumni/ae magazines. Yet one of these programs uses unsafe vehicles and receives no financial support from the school (but for fifty percent of the coordinator's salary). To the students, the school's intentions are insincere. The school is more concerned with improving its image than with helping people in need.

Faculty. "They come from privileged backgrounds, and they are not exposed to suffering and other problems; community service gets them out into the world to see a side a life they would not otherwise see," declared one teacher. Another faculty member thinks her "students are incredibly insular and protected." There is some agreement, then, between students and faculty about the objectives of community service: students ought to be exposed to the world outside their affluent and safe communities. One teacher commented that community service "broadens students' outlooks by helping them to see life from others' points of view." Community service is a way to extend the boundaries of the school, to expand the range of experiences students have, and to expose students to a variety of people and circumstances. Faculty echo the social development rationale articulated by students.

Another theme emerging from conversations with faculty is that community service makes a student's experience whole, service makes school more than just academic. "Community service puts more of a human factor in their four years," commented one faculty member, "it is a way of providing a total experience." In a religious school one teacher said "We are educating the whole child about what it means to be a responsible Christian in today's world." Community service helps students to see that there is "more to being a citizen than being academic or athletic." Service, then, is a means for schools to address non-academic issues, to address matters of the heart.

Service provides students with a chance to look beyond themselves, to be concerned about the plight of others. "A lot of kids come from wealthy backgrounds. Their whole job here is to get ahead, to succeed. The service program casts a new idea in their mind that this school is not an entirely self-serving place," observed one faculty member. According to this faculty member, service provides students with an opportunity to serve others without the expectation that their own interests will benefit.

School Heads. "We live in a me-centered society," commented one head, "and community service is one of a variety of ways to help young people overcome me-directed attitudes." According to this school head, students are too preoccupied with personal matters such as getting good grades (at the expense of really learning) and getting into college. Asked to illustrate what he meant by students being "me-directed", he said, "Students are preoccupied with grades. They have a preference for asking teachers to tell them what to know instead of making a commitment to the active search for knowledge, and they are increasingly making commitments to professions that are clearly material- and power-related as opposed to service-related."

Another head said,

> When I talk in assembly and say that this not a college-prep school they laugh at me. I'm trying to say, 'Yes, but it is only part of what we are.' They have trouble seeing that we are more than that. Knowledge is, for them, a tool through which they are able to help themselves more. I teach that knowledge is a way to help others. I don't think they see it.

These heads perceive community service as a potential antidote to the me generation. Since students are too concerned with their own situations, community service provides them with the opportunity to tend actively to the needs of others. As a result of engaging in community service, according to one head, students will learn to "think of the other person and to have concern for the less privileged."

A paradox is embedded in the complaints of school heads about the self-centeredness of the current student generation.

In The Good High School Sara Lawrence Lightfoot observes, "...

high schools always seemed poised toward the future"(p. 356). Moreover, this concern with the future "... encourages a greater emphasis on positioning and competition for slots in society beyond school, for places in prestigious colleges"(p. 356). She concludes, "Poised towards the future, students are more likely to focus on getting there". Independent school mission statements accentuate preparation for highter education: "This school has as its primary academic objective the preparation of young people for higher education." "This school is committed to preparing students for higher education...." "This school concerns itself with the total development of individuals in preparation for a challenging university or liberal arts college."

Most independent schools have specialized offices whose only concern is college placement. Colleges visit regularly and speak with students. The process begins in earnest during their junior year. Lists of where students attend college are displayed prominently in school catalogues, yearbooks, and school papers. Getting into to the "right" college is frequently the primary concern of students and their families. Regardless of the rhetoric, reputations of many independent schools are closely tied to where its students matriculate.

The world facing students in 1986 is different from what it was during the Sixties--the era of great energy and student activism. Competition for admission to the nation's most competitive schools has increased. Government scholarship money for college education has dried up and most students face huge debts upon graduating from college. If the market has tightened, if students have large debts to repay, is it any surprise that they are incredibly pragmatic about their futures?

Interestingly, the means advocated by many school heads to mitigate the self-centeredness of the current student generation--community service--is valued for the role it can play in college admission. Students, faculty, and administrators point out that community service helps students present a more well-rounded college application. One coordinator pointed out that "Colleges are interested in community service. On-campus representatives from colleges have always expressed an interest in it."

Students, faculty, and parents agree that the chief objective of community service is to expose students to people and circumstances they would not ordinarily see. The "problem" community service responds to, according to students, faculty, and parents, is that students in independent schools are "sheltered" from the "real world." Community service is a means for exposing students to some of the cruel, harsh, and unfair realities of the world that exists beyond the borders of their school and community.

Most heads (heads in six of the nine schools visited) identify student self-centeredness as the central problem that community service attempts to address. For them, community service is an antidote to the me generation. By engaging in service, students will hopefully appreciate the value of serving others (particularly those who are "less fortunate") without regard for their own interests. Yet, heads often blame students for behaving in ways that are consistent with the times, and schools often contribute to student anxiety and pragmatism about the future by their emphasis on and commitment to college preparation. Perhaps the self-centeredness of students is directly related to the values and cultures emphasized by some independent schools.

What do Service Programs Really Accomplish?

Most schools expect their programs to expose students to people who are less fortunate. Some school statements of purpose make ambitious claims about students acting on "...problems of oppression and injustice." Students, faculty, parents, and administrators express personal goals for community service that are consistent with the formal program goals, emphasizing exposure to people who are less fortunate and developing service as a habit in students. But what do service programs accomplish? What do students gain from participating in community service?

> Colleges look at this stuff. It looks really good to them. They want someone really responsible.

College Application Enhancement. Students and schools are "poised toward the future" with the "emphasis on positioning and competition for...places in prestigious colleges" (Lightfoot; 356). That "colleges look at this stuff" is an important benefit of community service for some students. As one student observed, "My primary interest in doing community service was for college. But my attitude has changed. A whole new world has been opened up for me. It has changed me quite a lot." Other students concede that while having community service on their transcripts helps their college applications, that was not the principal reason why they engage in community service. Students often refer disparingly to peers who "do it because it will look good on their college applications." Students and adults are uneasy about those who have personal and selfish motives for doing service. To serve in order to help yourself is perceived as a "wrong reason" for doing community service.

Yet at some schools engaging in service to enhance one's college application is explicitly endorsed, not denounced. Some schools use this as a "hook" to sell the program. One coordinator argues, "If a kid is mediocre in a varsity sport, he might stand out better if he worked one month with retarded children." Community service has a favorable impact on college admissions, in his opinion, when colleges "get a letter from the site director that describes explicitly what the student does." Service "shows that a kid can cope with difficult situations--he has the ability to adjust, and service is a step out into the world."

"Any program like this, in a school such as this, where there are kids who are highly competitive," one teacher explained, "will result in students doing service to get it on their transcript." Most coordinators realize that student self-interest is a motive, an important one for some students. Concern about college admissions is a fact of life in independent schools. One coordinator remarked, "operating in your own self-interest is not necessarily hurting the other guy." He asserts that self-interest is not always antithetical to public interest.

Ambivalence surrounds this issue. While students are reluctant to admit that they participate in their school's community service program because it will enhance their college applications, many nonetheless seem to believe that service impresses colleges and can make a difference. But students *and* faculty say that those who do service to help themselves are doing it for the "wrong reasons." One coordinator said "If a kid told me that he was doing it to get into college, I would tell him not to do it; that is a rotten reason."

> You realize that people count on you.
>
> There was pressure on me; people were counting on me to get the job done. I had never felt that much responsibility placed on me. Sixty people relied on me each day. I started to take pride in what I was doing.
>
> I gained a new sense of responsibility. I had to go even when I wanted to skip it.

Responsibility. At each of the nine schools students consistently articulate a genuine sense of responsibility gained as a result of community service. Perhaps for the first time in their lives, people (aside from family members) count on them.

Patients in hospitals count on their presence, their service, and their good cheer. Children in day care centers look forward to their visits, warm embraces, and encouragement. Residents in nursing homes rely on them to listen, to laugh, and, at times, to cry. Handicapped people expect their encouragement, friendship, and support.

Students realize that they are important to the people they serve, that what they do for and with these people matters a great deal, regardless of how trivial the task might seem. Students realize that the people they serve care about them. While in other situations, where they are the "performing selves," students are valued because of their intelligence, wealth, good looks, athletic ability, or connections, in the "real life" situation of community service there is no jockeying for position and no self-interested planning. Real-life situations, people, and consequences make community service a worthwhile experience for many students.

> Awake the students to the fact that there are other people out there. It is alarming to realize that there are people who can't have anything they want. People at this school have a single-minded view of life. Service opens up their perspective.
>
> Before I did service, I'd see handicapped people and I would try to avoid them. I worked with them, and now I

> have a different feeling about handicapped people--I'm more comfortable around them.
>
> Most of us, without community service, would grow up in a tunnel vision world.
>
> There are a lot of people at this school who are pretty wealthy. They don't see another side of life. I worked at a hospice for the terminally ill, and with one young boy in particular. I take him on trips, we write, and I plan to see him at Christmas.

Exposure. Students repeatedly claim that community service expands their horizons. Their assumption appears to be that their horizons, their knowledge of the world and of people who are different, are narrow. But for television news stories, they rarely see the pain, suffering, death, and poverty that effects people across this country and throughout the world. Community service gives them, as one student said, "a sort of reality."

Students speak of being exposed to "real world" issues and of learning to deal with people from many different backgrounds. Community service is a means for students to "see a different slice of life," the lives of people who are "less fortunate." They work with people who are poor, people who have very little schooling, people who are on society's sideline, including the elderly, the mentally retarded, and the handicapped. According to students, working with these people helps them put their own lives into perspective. As students' horizons expand, their former concerns are far less important--they appear trivial.

The Limits of Exposure

> How seriously do students and teachers approach the joint endeavor of confronting the subject that brings them together? How much do they really care? How much energy are they willing to expend? (Powell, Farrar, and Cohen, p.70)
>
> Intensity is the difference between the capacity to perform and the will to perform, between a passive and an active attitude. It signifies desire, sweat, and hard work exerted toward well-understood personal or group objectives. (Powell, Farrar, and Cohen, pp. 96-97)

Exposure is what most students experience during their involvement in community service. The vast majority of programs aim to expose students to people who are less fortunate than they are--people with whom they would not ordinarily come into contact. Yet some programs aspire to go beyond such exposure, to engage students. Engagement implies intensity. In such programs students take service seriously, they are intellectually engaged, the school's approach is multi-dimensional, and the school genuinely cares about service. Programs that engage students demand not only that students use their hearts (e.g., sympathize or empathize with clients), they also insist that students understand intellectually the "broad social dynamics" underlying the situations of the people they serve (the plight of the elderly, causes of poverty, racism, etc,). Engagement programs require more commitment from their students than just fulfilling the required number of hours.

In 1981 Conrad and Hedin concluded that "... experiential-based educational programs can be highly effective in promoting personal, social, and intellectual development--and can do so more effectively than classroom instruction alone"(p. 75). More recently, Newmann and Rutter (1983) found "... that community service programs contribute to students' sense of social competence and responsibility to the community beyond school"(p. 40). Other researchers have concluded that community service is more symbol than substance (Cookson and Persell, 1985). Some school heads and faculty question whether elaborate programs are needed to attain program goals.

In Preparing For Power: America's Elite Boarding Schools (1985), Cookson and Persell write:

> The service mission of the schools, so cherished by generations of heads and teachers, fails to change many students. As one head said, "My goals for the school involve working with the value issue, so that people will use their lives in constructive ways, and have a sense of service." Indeed, the official high morals of the schools appear to have little impact on students' social conscience: 17 percent of ninth graders believe it is "very important" to be a community leader, as do 17 percent of the seniors; 25 percent of ninth graders believe that correcting inequalities is very important as do 25 percent of the seniors (p. 167).

According to these authors, students "...are taught by the head to camouflage their interests in the rhetoric of morality and community service"(p. 120). Cookson and Persell see community service as highly symbolic. The "student culture" of elite schools, they write, is determined more by parents than it is by schools' service missions: "money, success, and power are life's objectives, not delayed gratification and aesthetic contemplation" (p. 163).

Cookson and Persell's results are consistent with a survey conducted by the American Council on Education and University of California at Los Angeles. This annual study of entering college freshmen recently reported "... a fifteen-year decline in expectation of participation in the political life of the country, in any form of altruism, or of concern for the interests of others" (Newman). More specifically, "the values which show the largest decline are: 1) developing a philosophy of life; 2) participating in community affairs; 3) cleaning up the environment, and 4) promoting racial understanding"(Newman, p. 37).

Are Cookson's and Persell's findings convincing? Do they point to the ineffectiveness of elite schools' service missions and service programs? Perhaps their results underscore larger, complex societal problems. Since a control group was not used in the Cookson and Persell survey, how can we know how public school students would respond to the questions? Perhaps their response rates would be lower than what they found in elite schools.

To judge from interviews of students, schools with elaborate community service program structures, elegant program mission statements, and full-time staff do not necessarily have better, more effective programs. Some school heads and faculty argue that, in fact, elaborate structures are as symbolic as minimal program structures. They say that less structure is better--the emphasis ought to be on service, not on the program. As one faculty member put it, there is a virtue in having a "quiet commitment to service." Some believe that too much structure makes service less spontaneous, consequently less meaningful for students. One head said, "there is nothing wrong with being intramural instead of varsity. Sometimes intramural play can have more meaning than varsity play. If we get it [the service program] too shined up, it might not have the allure that it has now."

The difference between varsity and "intramural play" is that fewer people care about the outcome. If the caring, intensity, and commitment often associated with "varsity" athletics could be transferred to community service programs, students' service experiences might become as memorable and significant as many of their athletic experiences are. Schools that succeed at engaging their students may disprove Cookson and Persell's claim that community service in independent schools is merely rhetoric.

Engagement versus Exposure

Like most successful athletic programs, engagement service programs reflect purpose, preparation, care, effort, and recognition. The objectives in engagement programs are as clear and precise as objectives in athletics (although more complex than simply winning or losing!). Coaches and players expend extraordinary effort in preparing and playing their games. Coordinators and students in engagement programs prepare just as rigorously. In some schools students attend orientation meetings, participate in workshops on working with the elderly, retarded , or chronically ill, and read extensively before going to their placements. Summers are used by coordinators to review the program, work with placements, to evaluate courses, and to read. Students care about the people they serve and the opportunities they have to grow. Service coordinators and students invest substantial time and effort to insure that their "performances" at the placements are helpful to the client and meaningful for the students themselves. In engagement programs the efforts of students, faculty, parents, and site personnel are honored at celebrations. One school has an annual luncheon to thank all the people who are associated with program.

Perhaps the most conspicuous difference between engagement and exposure programs lies in program objectives. Engagement programs have detailed, explicit, and comprehensive objectives. Engagement programs move beyond the rhetoric. Their objectives are concrete:

> To learn about a community need and/or social service agency.
>
> To develop skills in organizing activities and solving problems.
>
> To understand the principles and practices of helping others in a social service setting.
>
> To examine the social implications of certain practices and values in society.

By contrast the objectives of an exposure program might typically be:

> ... to allow students an opportunity to serve the community.
>
> ... to broaden their horizons.

These are not unworthy goals, they are just not specific, concrete, or ambitious. Elegant statements of purpose without detailed and explicit objectives are, as Cookson and Persell claim, "camouflage." Engagement service programs proceed from reasonable but ambitious, concrete objectives--not from rhetoric.

Engagement programs are intense. They reflect extensive effort on the part of the coordinator, support staff, and students. Coordinators in engagement programs are unswerving in their commitment to service and to the program. They work long hours. They attend to details because they realize that little things can become big things. Intense coordinators frequently think about service, write about it, and talk about it. They are "champions" (see Chapter 4). In some cases their intensity is emulated by students whose service commitments go beyond the required number of hours or who remain involved in service beyond their high school years. Such students develop and sustain an obligation to help people in need, and a responsibility to the community.

Engagement programs are intellectually demanding. Students are asked not only to feel, but to think. They are asked to think about social problems, social policies, and personal feelings about helping. Engagement programs conduct reflection sessions for participating students. Students are expected to keep journals, to research issues related to their placement (mental retardation, aging, child development, poverty). As one coordinator observed, "Students need to understand the broad social dynamics of poverty to really understand people in need. They need something analytic to understand the social dynamics of the poor."

Conclusion

No one of the programs studied fully exhibits all the *engagement* characteristics described above--such a program is an ideal type. Yet *engagement* programs aim to do more than expose their students to the "real world" or to cultivate in them the service habit. *Engagement* programs demand that students move beyond "feeling badly" about the people they serve and toward an understanding of the "... embedded inequalities of power, privilege, and esteem...." in our society (Bellah et al., p.204). The habit of service, as cultivated in *exposure* programs, is insufficient.

As John Dewey wrote in *Democracy and Education*:

> Habit means that an individual undergoes a modification through an experience, which modification forms a predisposition to easier and more effective action in a like direction in the future.... But habit, apart from knowledge, does not make allowance for change of conditions, for novelty.

> In other words, knowledge is a perception of those connections of an object which determine its applicability in a given situation.... while a habit apart from knowledge supplies us with a single fixed method of attack, knowledge means that selection may be made from a much wider range of habits (p. 395).

Service without knowledge, without an understanding of the "embedded inequalities" of our society, means, for example, that students are unable to make connections between the plight of the poor and social policies. Going through the motions, just doing service without reflection and without knowledge, undermines the power of people who serve to make changes in institutions, to make things better for people who are in need. Service without engagement prepares students to make things "less bad," it fails to help them make the connections that will lead to change.

CONCLUSION

> There is today a dangerous mismatch between the country's urgent need for civic mindedness and the parochial attitudes of its citizens.... there are clear signs that self-interest is undermining public interest (Newman).

> If America is to remain viable as a unified nation and as a democracy its young people must have a sense of civic responsibility, a sense of responsibility to and for the whole society (Chandler).

Newman and Chandler sense a malaise among today's youth. School heads repeatedly remark that community service aims to mitigate the self-centeredness of today's student generation. Derek Bok, president of Harvard University, said in his 1985 commencement address, "We hear that students have lost interest in the welfare of others and the problems of society. They have abandoned their idealism for a consuming preoccupation with themselves, their security, and their careers" (Bok). Such claims are supported by survey data from incoming college freshmen; since 1972, students have lost interest in issues such as the environment, racial equality, and community matters (Newman).

Authoritative voices in schools, in government, and in higher education indicate that community service is an activity that will mitigate the current trend of self-interest among young people. Community service, it is argued, will foster a more active interest in societal problems such as racial equality and poverty. In independent schools, in particular, community service is expected to expose students to a world not often encountered by them or by their families--a world of poverty, pain, suffering, and death. Such "exposure" is important, it is held, because independent schools train society's future leaders.

Among school heads, faculty, and parents, community service is perceived as a panacea for the current student generation's unhealthy preoccupation with self. Yet the quality of this "panacea" varies widely from school to school. Instrumental service programs are directly related to the school's mission. In schools with such programs the school policies support the service program by making time available in the academic schedule for students to engage in service. Committed program coordinators are diligent in their efforts to insure that community service is a worthwhile experience for students. In reflection sessions and academic courses students are asked to think intellectually and analytically about their service experiences. Strategic service programs have a more tenuous philosophical foothold in their schools. Such programs are fueled by the efforts of a single committed adult rather than by institutional purpose. School policies related to the schedule are untouchable, and students rarely have the opportunity to reflect on their service experiences with other students and adults. Symbolic programs do not have philosophical roots in their schools. As is the case with strategic programs, individuals drive and sustain symbolic service programs. School policies rarely support symbolic programs and occassionally undermine them, and students almost never talk or think about their service experience as part of the program.

Great expectations surround community service programs in independent schools, regardless of whether they are instrumental, strategic, or symbolic. In all three program categories, student reactions to service were strikingly similar. According to students, the most important benefit derived from service is that it exposes them to the "real world." Many students express genuine sympathy for the people they serve--some saddened by the treatment of the elderly, some puzzled by the lack of opportunities for inner city blacks and Hispanics, and some frustrated by the marginalization of handicapped people. Students "feel badly" about people who are "less fortunate"; however, their comments rarely reflect a sensitivity to or understanding of the social dynamics of poverty and racism. Students seem to accept such circumstances as a given. Their comments focus on the personal satisfaction they derive from serving, not on underlying issues. Few students articulate a vision of a world without poverty and racism or other social ills.

If the prime benefits of service for students are that it makes them feel good and it exposes them to the "real world," then is it realistic to expect community service to mitigate the alleged self-centeredness and narrowness of the current student generation? Does community service go far enough?

> Schools attempt to teach the duty of ritualistic citizen participation in voting, letter writing or volunteer service, but fail to generate active inquiry about the nature of the public good or commitment to working for it. The dominant rationale for education is individual aggrandizement and personal fulfillment. We see this ideology as leading to cultural degradation and global suicide, because it neglects human needs for communal (as opposed to individual) fulfillment, it minimizes the significance of interdependence in the larger human community, and it abdicates collective moral responsibility for the survival and integrity of human life (Newmann and Rutter, pp. 3-4).

If community service programs do not address the synergystic relationship between social, political, and economic institutions and the the plight of the "less fortunate," will students ever move beyond sympathy, will they ever be motivated to initiate change in order to eradicate such situations?

The risk of not addressing such issues is that community service becomes a stereotype-confirming experience for students.

In his study of privileged children, Robert Coles writes

> One can brusquely try to help others, and care little for them, only for the experience of looking down upon the helpless or weak--thereby gaining a sense of personal strength and confirming any number of prejudices about those in need of 'help' (Coles, p. 493).

Student comments reflect sympathy but little understanding. As one teacher commented, "You can't undo stereotypes by merely sending kids to hospitals or to inner-city schools."

These questions are raised to prompt discussion among school-people about a potentially rich and rewarding learning experience for students and faculty. In many schools, community service is a hollow ritual, not a dynamic, challenging, and multi-dimensional learning opportunity for students. Nevertheless, thousands of students make significant contributions to their communities. In some cases, community service has a profound impact on students--their lives are radically changed as a result of engaging in service work. But the goal of community service is not to cultivate people for the service professions. Community service can be a vehicle for promoting understanding which then can lead to change, to improvement, and to making life better for people in this nation and in the world. Our students see different people but there is rarely any interpenetration--the world of the "less fortunate" remains separate and mysterious.

Formal, adult-sponsored opportunities for students to learn about, to analyze, and to ponder the circumstances of the people they serve and their personal reactions to those circumstances, may expand the emotional and intellectual understanding students have of their service experiences. Such emotional and intellectual engagement may also demystify people who are poor, handicapped, elderly, and in the racial minority. Some programs in this study do strive to transcend mere exposure, such programs aim to engage the hearts and the minds of students.

APPENDIX A

Service activity categories:

Work with the Elderly

-Variety of approaches ranging from "Adopt-A-Grandparent" programs to students providing local nursing homes with musical entertainment.

-An activity that all schools--lower, middle, and upper--can embrace.

Special Olympics

-Students and faculty both are enthusiastic about this program. One coordinator referred to Special Olympics as a "one day miracle."

-Many schools provide facilities and volunteers to local Special Olylmpics.

Inner-city tutoring

-Students sent into inner-city schools to work with students (groups and individuals) in areas such as math, computers, and English.

-During interviews, student volunteers expressed concern about their lack of preparation for teaching and for the students. Many felt as though they were "thrown to the wolves."

Soup Kitchens

-Students assume responsibility for cooking, serving, and clean-up at local soup kitchens.

-Some schools donate food.

Big Brother/Sister

-Usually done off-campus through local agency.

-Some schools utilize concept on campus with upper-school students as Big Brothers/Sisters to lower-school students.

Work with Prisoners

-Regular visits to prisons to tutor prisoners.

Hospitals

-This old "stand-by" is not popular with many coordinators because of the lack of supervision in most hospitals and because of the nature of most volunteer work--clerical/menial non-patient oriented tasks.

-Students who worked in hospitals often felt victimized by full-time employees who passed off their work to them.

Work with handicapped

-Students derive tremendous satisfaction from this type of work once they overcome their seemingly insurmountable fear of people who are handicapped.

Environmental-related activities

-These ranged from local park clean-ups to students working on policy-related issues for particular interest groups.

A problem encountered by more than one school relates to the school's definition of acceptable or appropriate community service work. Some schools utilize their service requirements to fulfill on-campus needs such as campus tour-guides, singing in the choir, officiating at lower or middle school athletic contests, delivering attendance slips to the main office, and delivering newspapers to the faculty. For students working in nursing homes, prisons, and inner-city schools, their school's acceptance of the above activities was highly problematic.

Many coordinators emphasize that community service should be clearly defined at the start to avoid confusion. Most coordinators are emphatic about service work occuring off-campus and with *people who are in need*. In their estimation, working with local community youth teams is not work with people who are less fortunate. Another proviso is that students should work with people in *face-to-face* situations.

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